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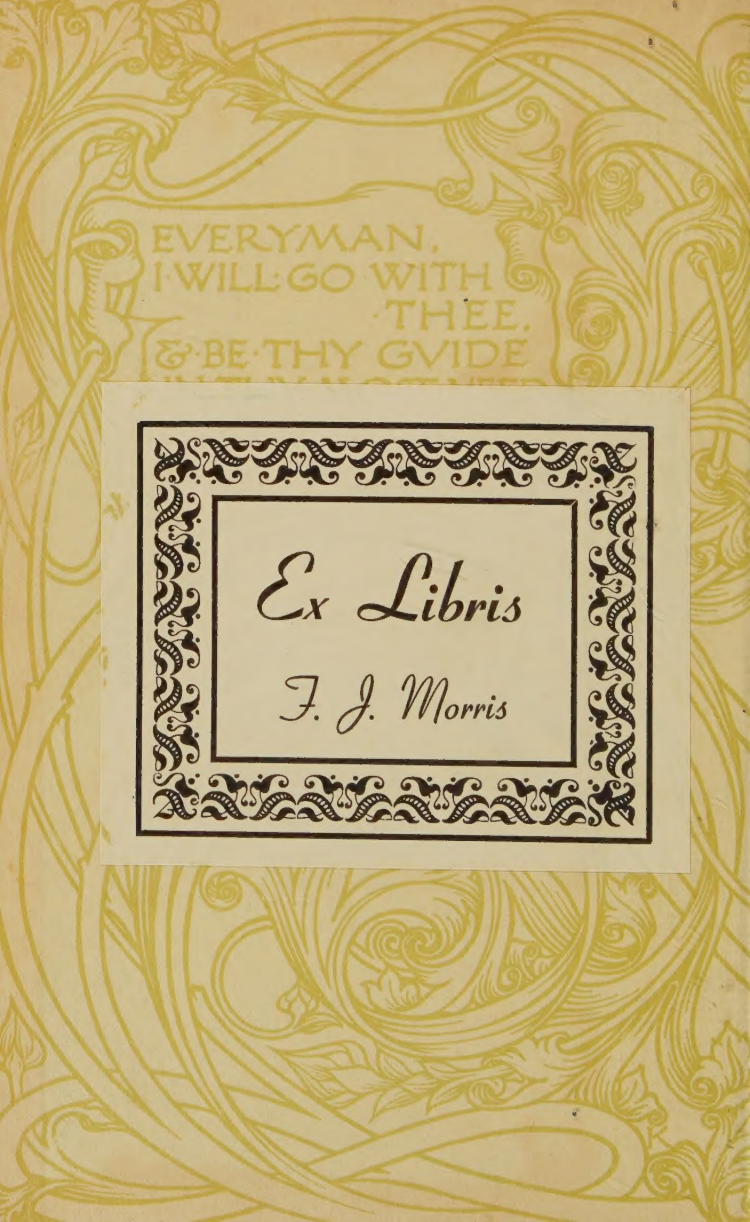
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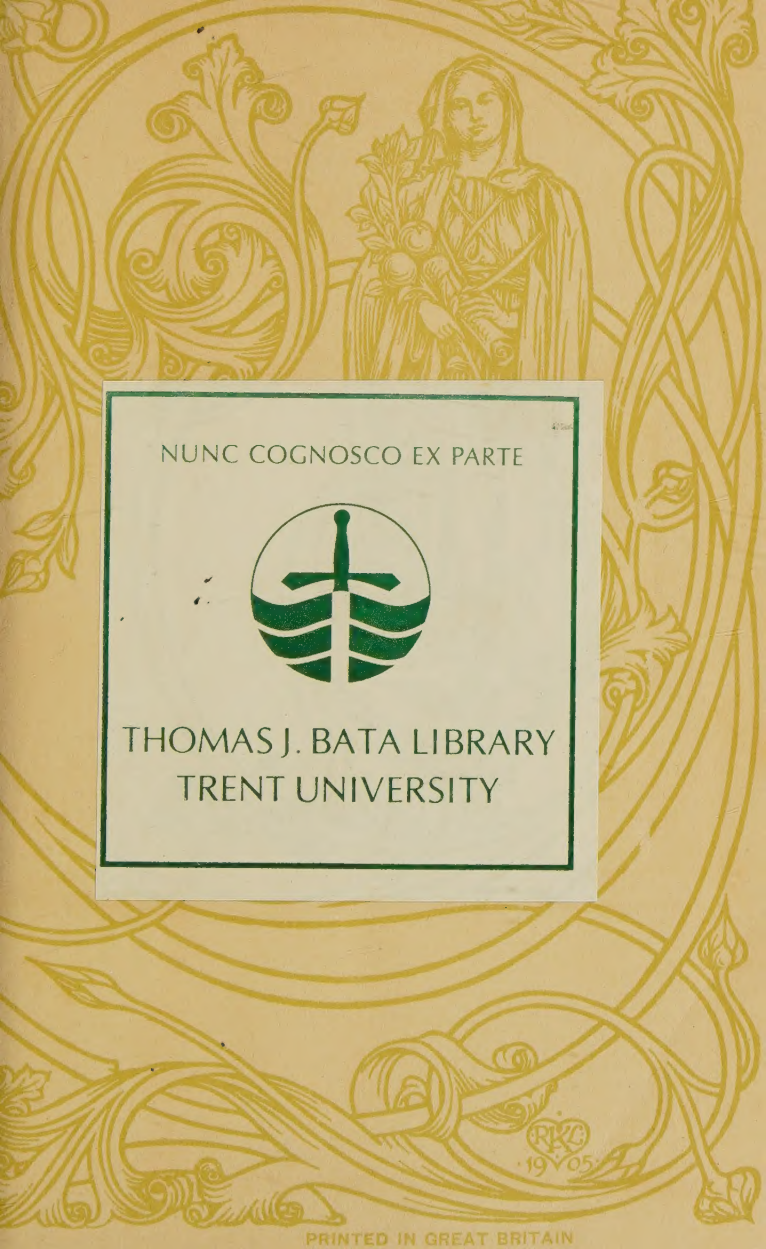

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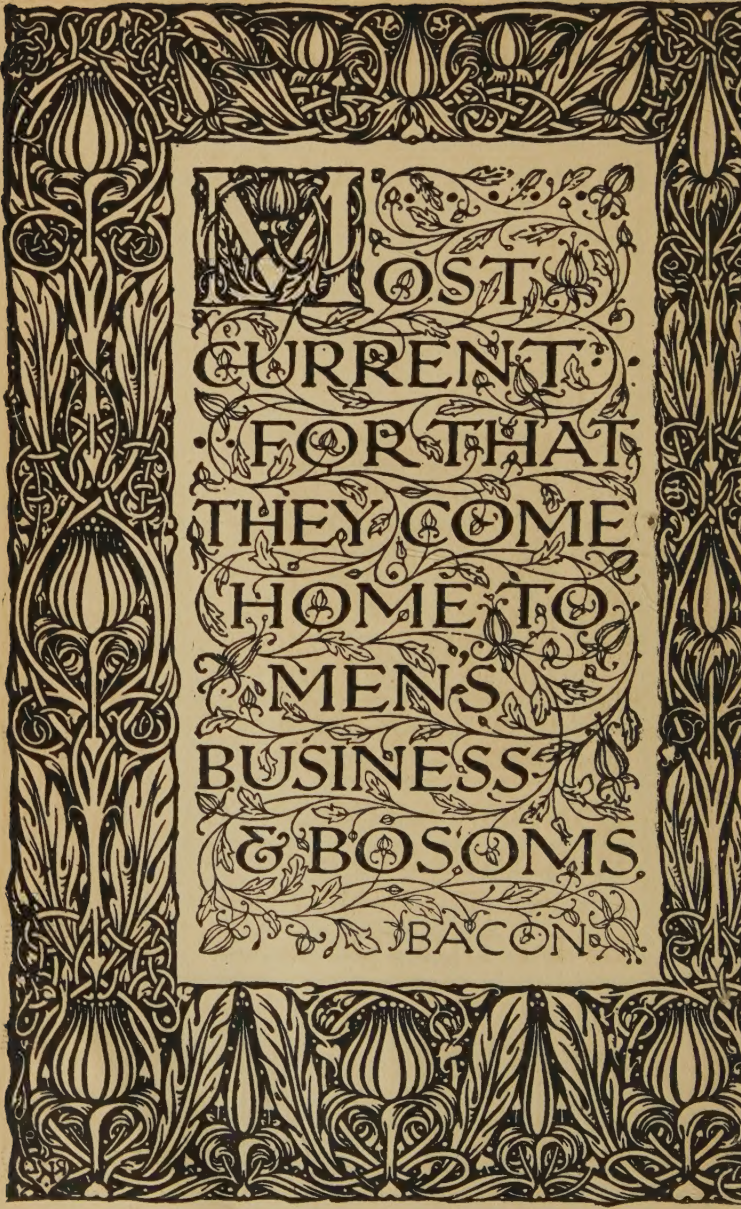
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ESSAYS (SELECTED) BY LEIGH HUNT

EVERY MAN I WILL GO WITH THEE BE THY GVIDE

IN THY MOST NEED TO GO BY THY SIDE

LONDON & TORONTO
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INTRODUCTION

Leigh Hunt had a long life and by no means an unhappy one, in spite of the fact that he suffered from various domestic troubles, constant debt, and all the trials of an over-worked editor and journalist. A lover of fine letters, he was the friend and associate of an astonishing number of great writers. The list is almost startling: Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Carlyle, Browning, Macaulay, and (unhappily, if we remember *Bleak House*) Dickens; to name only the most important. But this has not been fortunate for his reputation, since it means that, whether as poet, critic, or essayist, he is always to be discovered in the company of men better than he was. Thus, had he not worked side by side, as it were, with Lamb and Hazlitt, he might have enjoyed a greater reputation as an essayist. He has humour and pathos, but they pale before the humour and pathos of Lamb. He has wit and an acute critical mind, but not the wit and acuteness of Hazlitt. Compared with these two great essayists, he seems at first almost a faint figure, like a faded watercolour hanging between two Venetian masterpieces.

The essay in the hands of Lamb or Hazlitt is a piece of creative literature, the prose equivalent of a lyric by a Wordsworth or a Shelley. This creative force, Leigh Hunt rarely, if ever, achieves. He goes to work on a lower level. Lamb and Hazlitt give us table-talk only in the sense in which a poet is said to "sing" his compositions. Nobody—except perhaps the inspired Coleridge—ever talked as well as Lamb and Hazlitt wrote. But Leigh Hunt's essays do seem actual talk captured in print. They really are "causeries," ranging from light chatter to an occasional strain of grave monologue. It would not be impossible to make a distinction between the essay, the creative thing, and what is frequently called "miscellaneous writing." As an essayist, pure and simple, Leigh Hunt is undoubtedly not in the first rank. But as a miscellaneous writer, talking in print on an extraordinary

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variety of subjects, a greater variety than you will find in either Lamb or Hazlitt, he has few serious rivals. Because he was far more the journalist than either of his two great contemporaries, his work has one advantage over theirs, namely, that it sketches his world as it passes more surely than theirs do. Some of these papers are like little peepholes through which we may catch a vivid glimpse of the life of the Regency. For a few minutes, we see the old mail-coach rolling down the street, hear the musical cries of the hawkers, and feel upon our faces the sun and wind and rain of a lost world.

There are a few lines about Hunt in Shelley's *Letter to Maria Gisborne* that might be applied to his essays:

> . . . His room no doubt
> Is still adorned by many a cast from Shout,
> With graceful flowers, tastefully placed about;
> And coronals of bay from ribbons hung.
> And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung. . . .

The graceful flowers, tastefully placed about, are the quotations from the poets, superbly chosen, with which Hunt likes to adorn and enrich his essays. In his own work, especially his verse, his taste was never sure; a curious strain of vulgarity peeps out now and again; but his taste in other men's work was excellent, and he presents the reader of his essays with an admirable anthology. His reading was wide, far wider than that of Lamb or Hazlitt—indeed, only Coleridge among his contemporaries had the same range—and he proves again and again his excellence as a critic not merely by making sensible and sometimes very acute remarks, but by fishing out exactly the right quotation. There is too in these essays that suggestion of bright untidiness which Shelley notices. They are an odd but pleasant jumble. There is no attempt to deal with subjects only on one level, or to restrict the treatment to one "key." A paper will begin as a joke and end perhaps as a piece of serious literary criticism or a lay sermon. Another will start its career as a sober little thesis, and then gradually lose itself in a stream of anecdotes. Not a few of these essays are clearly last-minute productions, hastily penned after consulting a reference book or two. Yet the whole medley and motley bears witness to the same personality, and we know we are in the company of Leigh Hunt.

Very good company it is too, in spite of one or two failings. "A matchless fireside companion," Lamb called him; and

though the whole man, with his good looks and gentle high spirits, his quick sympathies and easy manner, has not been captured in cold print, there is enough of him in these essays to make us appreciate Lamb's judgment. Carlyle, in temperament and tastes, had little in common with Hunt; indeed it would be difficult to find two men of letters who were more unlike one another; yet of Hunt, Carlyle could write:

> He is a man of the most indisputably superior worth—a man of genius in a very strict sense of that word, and in all the senses which it bears or implies; of brilliant, varied gifts, of graceful fertility, of clearness, lovingness, truthfulness; of childlike, open character; also of most pure, even exemplary, private deportment; a man who can be other than loved only by those who have not seen him, or seen from a distance through a false medium.

We can only see him from a distance, but nobody can read the essays that follow without realising the truth of Carlyle's description. To say "he was a man of genius in a very strict sense of that word," to say that he was a genius in any sense of that word, is to over-estimate him, I must confess; and here, for once, Carlyle was carried away by an affectionate remembrance of a contemporary. But the rest will stand; and "graceful fertility" could hardly be bettered. So too, after reading his essays, we feel the force of that "childlike, open character."

One of the qualities—and it happens to be rare—that mark Leigh Hunt's miscellaneous writing is his sense of fun. You may call it humour if you will, but it seems to me nearer to what we think of as fun. He enjoys larking about with a subject. There is a twinkle in the very first sentence. Lamb's humour, that wild dark jesting of his, is at once terribly intimate and yet universal; but Leigh Hunt's fun is neither one nor the other, but somewhere between, gently domesticated, like the playfulness of an old friend at a family party. Especially does he excel in humorous descriptive papers, such as his *Getting Up on Cold Mornings*, and *A Now—Descriptive of a Hot Day*, and, in a more restrained manner, the essays on an old gentleman and an old lady, which seem to me the best things of their kind we have. I first made the acquaintance of these more playful essays when I was a boy; they captured my imagination then, no doubt because they were so rich in concrete illustrations, exact humorous imagery; and when I turn to them now, they never fail to renew their charm.

There can be no doubt that Leigh Hunt wrote far too many short miscellaneous things. For some time, he actually attempted to write a daily paper by himself. Even some of his reprinted articles suggest a man who has nothing much to say but is only too well aware of the fact that he must say something. Nevertheless, it does not follow, as so many critics have imagined it did, that if he had had more time to think and more time to write, he would therefore have given us a body of work far superior to the one we possess. It is certainly our loss that he never produced any sustained pieces of criticism, for though he had not the subtlety of Coleridge or Lamb, the intellectual drive of Hazlitt, his taste in pure literature was in some respects better than theirs. But it is doubtful if a more leisurely method of production would have made him a better essayist. Temperamentally, he was a genial gossip in literature, a man who does not go deep down into himself for rich hidden treasure of thought and feeling, but who glides gracefully over the surface of life and art, and we must accept the defects of his genuine virtues. Among them is a marked inequality in his writing. These essays are talk; and sometimes in them he talks badly, sometimes merely indifferently, and sometimes superbly well. Apart from an occasional descent into sheer sloppiness—and this was Hunt's greatest weakness, no matter in what capacity—his prose is very pleasant, easy gliding stuff, not very memorable and yet by no means the colourless and toneless writing of the hasty journalist. Indeed, most of it only needs a little stiffening and sharpening to be very good prose, and it always suggests better breeding than his verse.

When he wants to make a phrase, it is always there. Dip into these papers, and you will soon notice that. Thus, in his *Far Countries*, he remarks: "The long-lost voyager must have been like a person consecrated in all the quarters of heaven. His staff and his beard must have looked like relics of his former self." Of Hogarth, he observes: "His very goods and chattels are didactic." Of Lazarillo, hero of one of those Spanish epics of starvation, he remarks: "It is enough for him if, by a train of the most ingenious contrivances, he can lay successful siege to a crust. To rout some broken victuals—to circumvent an onion or so extraordinary—is the utmost aim of his ambition. An ox-foot is his *beau-idéal.* He has as intense and circuitous a sense of a piece of cheese as a mouse at a trap." Of a pompous leg: "It has a large

balustrade calf, an ankle that would be monstrous in any other man, but looks small from the contrast, a tight knee well buttoned, and a seam inexorably in the middle. It is a leg at once gross and symbolical. Its size is made up of plethora and superfluity; its white cotton stocking affects a propriety; its inflexible seam and side announce the man of clock-work. A dozen hard-worked dependants go at least to the making up of that leg. If in black, it is the essence of infinite hams at old ladies' Sunday dinners." All this is very good writing, in which the neat rhythm of the prose aids the wit, as it does in the best artificial comedy. And here is a graver strain:

The remembered innocence and endearments of a child stand us instead of virtues that have died older. Children have not exercised the voluntary offices of friendship; they have not chosen to be kind and good to us; nor stood by us, from conscious will, in the hour of adversity. But they have shared their pleasures and pains with us as well as they could; the interchange of good offices between us has, of necessity, been less mingled with the troubles of the world; the sorrow arising from their death is the only one which we can associate with their memories. These are happy thoughts that cannot die. . . .

And this is prose that is something more than good talk.

Leigh Hunt was not one of those men who hug their delights in secret, who hate to share the pleasures of art. On the contrary, he was for ever running to spread the good news of literature. He was one of the first of our democratic book-men. And that is another reason for welcoming him into the "Everyman's Library." He will feel at home in it, and is perhaps even now rejoicing in the shades, just as many thousands of readers will soon rejoice in the companionship of his essays.

J. B. PRIESTLEY.

Born at Southgate, Middlesex, 19 October, 1784. Went to Christ's Hospital School, 1792. "Juvenilia" published by subscription, 1801, which reached fourth edition in 1804. Began writing for *The Traveller*, under pseudonym of Mr. Town, Junior; contributed theatrical criticism to his brother's paper, *The News*, 1805. Selections published under name of "Critical Essays on the Performers of the London Theatres"; "Classic Tales, Serious and Lively" (an anthology), 1807. Obtained clerkship in War Office under patronage of Addington, the premier, but abandoned it in order to edit *The Examiner*, 1808. Married Marianne Kent; "An Attempt to Show the Danger and Folly of Methodism" (reprint from *Examiner*), 1809. Editing *The Reflector*, 1810. Imprisoned for two years and fined

£500 for an outspoken article on the Prince Regent in *Examiner*, 1812. Continued to edit *The Examiner* while in prison. Left prison in February 1815. "The Story of Rimini" (greater part written in prison), 1816. "Foliage: or Poems, Original and Translated," 1818. "The Literary Pocket-book"; "Hero and Leander"; and "Bacchus and Ariadne"; "The Indicator" commenced in October, 1819. "Amyntas" (a trans.), 1820. Sails for Italy with wife and seven children, 15 November, 1821. After tremendous storm vessel driven into Dartmouth, where the Hunts land and pass on to Plymouth. Sails for Leghorn, May 1822. Joined by Shelley and moves to Pisa, occupying the ground floor of Byron's house; wrote epitaph for Shelley's tomb, July 1822. Left Pisa for Genoa with Byron, September 1822. Conducted *The Liberal* with Byron. Removed to Florence, 1823. Wrote "Ultra-Crepidavius," "Bacchus in Tuscany" (a trans.), "The Wishing Cap." Returns to England, September 1825. Settles at Highgate Hill; "Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries"; issues *The Companion*, a weekly periodical; settles at Epsom 1828; starts another periodical, *The Chat of the Week*, 1830. Issues daily literary paper of four pages entirely written by himself, *The Tatler*, 1830–32. "Sir Ralph Esher"; "Christianism" (later expanded to "The Religion of the Heart"), published by subscription, which lead to a life-long friendship with Carlyle; Collected Edition of his poems, also by subscription; Preface to Shelley's *Masque of Anarchy*, 1832. "The Indicator and the Companion" (selected articles), 1834. Articles to *Tait's Magazine*, *True Sun*, and *Monthly Chronicle*, 1833–41. *Leigh Hunt's London Journal*, 1834–5. Pension of £120 settled on him by Sir Percy Shelley, 1844. "Wit and Humour" (anthology); "Stories from the Italian Poets," 1846. Articles to the *Atlas*, published afterwards as "A Saunter through the West-End"; "Men, Women, and Books," 1847. "A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla" (selected papers from *Ainsworth's Magazine*); "The Town" (from the *London Journal*), 1848. "A Book for a Corner"; "Readings for Railways," 1849. "Autobiography," 1850. *Leigh Hunt's Journal* (in which were printed "The Descent of Liberty," "A Legend of Florence," "Lovers' Amazements"), 1850–1. "Table-Talk," 1851. Youngest son, Vincent, dies, 1852. "The Old Court Suburb"; "Beaumont and Fletcher" (anthology); "Stories in Verse," 1855. Wife died, 1857. Papers to *Spectator*, 1859. Contributed occasionally to *The Court Magazine*, *Household Words*, and *The Musical Times*. Died at Putney, 28 August, 1859.

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FAR COUNTRIES

IMAGINATION, though no mean thing, is not a proud one. If it looks down from its wings upon common places, it only the more perceives the vastness of the region about it. The infinity into which its flight carries it might indeed throw back upon it a too great sense of insignificance, did not beauty or Moral Justice, with its equal eye, look through that blank aspect of power, and reassure it; showing it that there is a power as much above power itself, as the thought that reaches to all, is to the hand that can touch only thus far.

But we do not wish to get into this tempting region of speculation just now. We only intend to show the particular instance, in which imagination instinctively displays its natural humility: we mean, the fondness which imaginative times and people have shown for what is personally remote from them; for what is opposed to their own individual consciousness, even in range of space, in farness of situation.

There is no surer mark of a vain people than their treating other nations with contempt, especially those of whom they know least. It is better to verify the proverb, and take everything unknown for magnificent, than predetermine it to be worthless. The gain is greater. The instinct is more judicious. When we mention the French as an instance, we do not mean to be invidious. Most nations have their good as well as bad features. In Vanity Fair there are many booths.

The French, not long ago, praised one of their neighbours so highly, that the latter is suspected to have lost as much modesty, as the former gained by it. But they did this as a set-off against their own despots and bigots. When they again became the greatest power in Europe, they had a relapse of their old egotism. The French, though an amiable and intelligent people, are not an imaginative one. The greatest height they go is in a balloon. They get no farther than France, let them go where they will. They "run the great circle and are still at home," like the squirrel in his rolling cage. Instead of going to Nature in their poetry, they would make her come to them, and dress herself at their last new toilet. In philosophy and metaphysics,

they divest themselves of gross prejudices, and then think they are in as graceful a state of nakedness as Adam and Eve.

At the time when the French had this fit upon them of praising the English (which was nevertheless the honester one of the two), they took to praising the Chinese for numberless unknown qualities. This seems a contradiction to the near-sightedness we speak of: but the reason they praised them was, that the Chinese had the merit of religious toleration; a great and extraordinary one certainly, and not the less so for having been, to all appearance, the work of one man. All the romance of China, such as it was—anything in which they differed from the French—their dress, their porcelain towers, their Great Wall—was nothing. It was the particular agreement with the philosophers.

It happened, curiously enough, that they could not have selected for their panegyric a nation apparently more contemptuous of others; or at least more self-satisfied and unimaginative. The Chinese are cunning and ingenious, and have a great talent at bowing out ambassadors who come to visit them. But it is somewhat inconsistent with what appears to be their general character, that they should pay strangers even this equivocal compliment; for under a prodigious mask of politeness, they are not slow to evince their contempt of other nations whenever any comparison is insinuated with the subjects of the Brother of the Sun and Moon. The knowledge they respect in us most is that of gun-making, and of the East-Indian passage. When our countrymen showed them a map of the earth, they inquired for China; and on finding that it only made a little piece in a corner, could not contain their derision. They thought that it was the main territory in the middle, the apple of the world's eye.

On the other hand, the most imaginative nations, in their highest times, have had a respect for remote countries. It is a mistake to suppose that the ancient term barbarian, applied to foreigners, suggested the meaning we are apt to give it. It gathered some such insolence with it in the course of time; but the more intellectual Greeks venerated the countries from which they brought the elements of their mythology and philosophy. The philosopher travelled into Egypt, like a son to see his father. The merchant heard in Phœnicia the fame brought stories of other realms, which he told to his delighted countrymen. It is supposed, that the mortal part of Mentor in the Odyssey was drawn from one of these voyagers. When

Anacharsis the Scythian was reproached with his native place by an unworthy Greek, he said, "My country may be a shame to me, but you are a shame to your country." Greece had a lofty notion of the Persians and the Great King, till Xerxes came over to teach it better, and betrayed the softness of their skulls.

It was the same with the Arabians, at the time when they had the accomplishments of the world to themselves; as we see by their delightful tales. Everything shines with them in the distance, like a sunset. What an amiable people are these Persians! What a wonderful place is the island of Serendib! You would think nothing could be finer than the Caliph's city of Bagdad, till you hear of "Grand Cairo"; and how has that epithet and that name towered in the imagination of all those, who have not had the misfortune to see the modern city! Sindbad was respected, like Ulysses, because he had seen so many adventures and nations. So was Aboulfaouris the Great Voyager, in the Persian Tales. His very name sounds like a wonder.

With many a tempest had his beard been shaken.

It was one of the workings of the great Alfred's mind, to know about far-distant countries. There is a translation by him of a book of geography; and he even employed people to travel: a great stretch of intellectual munificence for those times. About the same period, Haroun al Raschid (whom our manhood is startled to find almost a less real person than we thought him, for his very reality) wrote a letter to the Emperor of the West, Charlemagne. Here is Arabian and Italian romance, shaking hands in person.

The Crusades pierced into a new world of remoteness. We do not know whether those were much benefited, who took part in them; but for the imaginative persons remaining at home, the idea of going to Palestine must have been like travelling into a supernatural world. When the campaign itself *had* a good effect, it must have been of a very fine and highly-tempered description. Chaucer's Knight had been

> Sometime with the lord of Palatie
> Agen another hethen in Turkie:
> And evermore he had a sovereign price;
> And though that he was worthy, he was wise,
> And of his port as meek as is a mayde.

How like a return from the moon must have been the

reappearance of such travellers as Sir John Mandeville, Marco Polo, and William de Rubruquis, with their news of Prester John, the Great Mogul, and the Great Cham of Tartary! The long-lost voyager must have been like a person consecrated in all the quarters of heaven. His staff and his beard must have looked like relics of his former self. The Venetians, who were some of the earliest European travellers, have been remarked, among their other amiable qualities, for their great respect for strangers. The peculiarity of their position, and the absence of so many things which are commonplaces to other countries, such as streets, horses, and coaches, add, no doubt, to this feeling. But a foolish or vain people would only feel a contempt for what they did not possess. Milton, in one of those favourite passages of his, in which he turns a nomenclature into such grand meaning and music, shows us whose old footing he had delighted to follow. How he enjoys the distance; emphatically using the words *far, farthest,* and *utmost*!

> —Embassies from regions far remote,
> In various habits, on the Appian road,
> Or on the Emilian; some from farthest south,
> Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,
> Meroe, Nilotick Isle; and more to west,
> The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor sea;
> From the Asian kings, and Parthian among these;
> From India and the golden Chersonese,
> And utmost Indian isle Taprobane.—*Parad. Reg.* Bk. IV.

One of the main helps to our love of remoteness in general is the associations we connect with it of peace and quietness. Whatever there may be at a distance, people feel as if they should escape from the worry of their local cares. "O that I had wings like a dove! then would I fly away and be at rest." The word *far* is often used wilfully in poetry, to render distance still more distant. An old English song begins:

> In Irelande farre over the sea
> There dwelt a bonny king.

Thomson, a Scotchman, speaking of the western isles of his own country, has that delicious line, full of a dreary yet lulling pleasure;

> As when a shepherd of the Hebrid isles,
> *Placed far amid the melancholy main.*

In childhood, the total ignorance of the world, especially when we are brought up in some confined spot, renders every thing beyond the bounds of our dwelling a distance and romance. Mr. Lamb, in his *Recollections of Christ's Hospital*

says that he remembers when some half-dozen of his schoolfellows set off, "without map, card, or compass, on a serious expedition to find out Philip Quarll's Island." We once encountered a set of boys as romantic. It was at no greater distance than at the foot of a hill near Hampstead; yet the spot was so perfectly Cisalpine to them, that two of them came up to us with looks of hushing eagerness, and asked "whether, on the other side of that hill, there were not robbers"; to which, the minor adventurer of the two added, "and some say serpents." They had all got bows and arrows, and were evidently hovering about the place, betwixt daring and apprehension, as on the borders of some wild region. We smiled to think which it was that husbanded their suburb wonders to more advantage, they or we; for while they peopled the place with robbers and serpents, we were peopling it with sylvans and fairies.

So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The child is father to the man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

ADVICE TO THE MELANCHOLY

If you are melancholy for the first time, you will find upon a little inquiry, that others have been melancholy many times, and yet are cheerful now. If you have been melancholy many times, recollect that you have got over all those times; and try if you cannot find out means of getting over them better.

Do not imagine that mind alone is concerned in your bad spirits. The body has a great deal to do with these matters. The mind may undoubtedly affect the body; but the body also affects the mind. There is a reaction between them; and by lessening it on either side, you diminish the pain on both.

If you are melancholy, and know not why, be assured it must arise entirely from some physical weakness; and do your best to strengthen yourself. The blood of a melancholy man is thick and slow; the blood of a lively man is clear and quick. Endeavour therefore to put your blood in motion. Exercise is the best way to do it; but you may also help yourself, in moderation, with wine, or other excitements. Only you must take care so to proportion the use of any artificial stimulus,

that it may not render the blood languid by over-exciting it at first; and that you may be able to keep up, by the natural stimulus only, the help you have given yourself by the artificial.

Regard the bad weather as somebody has advised us to handle the nettle. In proportion as you are delicate with it, it will make you feel; but

> Grasp it like a man of mettle
> And the rogue obeys you well.

Do not the less, however, on that account, take all reasonable precaution and arms against it—your boots, etc., against wet feet, and your great-coat or umbrella against the rain. It is timidity and flight which are to be deprecated, not proper armour for the battle. The first will lay you open to defeat, on the least attack. A proper use of the latter will only keep you strong for it. Plato had such a high opinion of exercise, that he said it was a cure even for a wounded conscience. Nor is this opinion a dangerous one. For there is no system, even of superstition, however severe or cruel in other matters, that does not allow a wounded conscience to be curable by some means. Nature will work out its rights and its kindness some way or other, through the worst sophistications; and this is one of the instances in which she seems to raise herself above all contingencies. The conscience may have been wounded by artificial or by real guilt; but then she will tell it in those extremities, that even the real guilt may have been produced by circumstances. It is her kindness alone, which nothing can pull down from its predominance.

See fair play between cares and pastimes. Diminish your artificial wants as much as possible, whether you are rich or poor; for the rich man's, increasing by indulgence, are apt to outweigh even the abundance of his means, and the poor man's diminution of them renders his means the greater. On the other hand, increase all your natural and healthy enjoyments. Cultivate your afternoon fireside, the society of your friends, the company of agreeable children, music, theatres, amusing books, an urbane and generous gallantry. He who thinks any innocent pastime foolish, has either to grow wiser or is past the ability to do so. In the one case, his notion of being childish is itself a childish notion. In the other, his importance is of so feeble and hollow a cast, that it dare not move for fear of tumbling to pieces.

A friend of ours, who knows as well as any man how to unite industry with enjoyment, has set an excellent example to those

who can afford the leisure, by taking two Sabbaths every week instead of one—not Methodistical Sabbaths, but days of rest which pay true homage to the Supreme Being by enjoying his creation.

One of the best pieces of advice for an ailing spirit is to go to no sudden extremes—to adopt no great and extreme changes in diet or other habits. They may make a man look very great and philosophic to his own mind; but they are not fit for a being, to whom custom has been truly said to be a second nature. Dr. Cheyne may tell us that a drowning man cannot too quickly get himself out of the water; but the analogy is not good. If the water has become a second habit he might almost as well say that a fish could not get too quickly out of it.

Upon this point, Bacon says that we should discontinue what we think hurtful by little and little. And he quotes with admiration the advice of Celsus, that "a man do vary and interchange contraries, but rather with an inclination to the more benign extreme." "Use fasting," he says, "and full eating, but *rather* full eating; watching and sleep, but rather sleep; sitting and exercise, but rather exercise, and the like; so shall nature be cherished, and yet taught masteries."

We cannot do better than conclude with one or two other passages out of the same Essay, full of his usual calm wisdom. "If you fly physic in health altogether, it will be too strange for your body when you need it." (He means that a general state of health should not make us over-confident and contemptuous of physic; but that we should use it moderately if required, that it may not be too strange to us when required most.) "If you make it too familiar, it will have no extraordinary effect when sickness cometh. I commend rather some diet for certain seasons, than frequent use of physic, except it be grown into a custom; for those diets alter the body more and trouble it less."

"As for the passions and studies of the mind," says he, "avoid envy, anxious fears, anger fretting inwards, subtle and knotty inquisitions, joys, and exhilarations in excess, sadness not communicated" (for as he says finely, somewhere else, they who keep their griefs to themselves, are "cannibals of their own hearts"). "Entertain hopes; mirth rather than joy"; (that is to say, cheerfulness rather than boisterous merriment); "variety of delights rather than surfeit of them; wonder and admiration, and therefore novelties; studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature."

A FLOWER FOR YOUR WINDOW

In the window beside which we are writing this article, there is a geranium shining with its scarlet tops in the sun, the red of it being the more red for a background of lime-trees which are at the same time breathing and panting like airy plenitudes of joy, and developing their shifting depths of light and shade of russet brown and sunny inward gold.

It seems to say, "Paint me!" So here it is.

Every now and then some anxious fly comes near it:—we hear the sound of a bee, though we see none; and upon looking closer at the flowers, we observe that some of the petals are transparent with the light, while others are left in shade; the leaves are equally adorned after their opaquer fashion, with those effects of the sky, showing their dark-brown rims; and on one of them a red petal has fallen, where it lies on the brighter half of the shallow green cup, making its own red redder, and the green greener. We perceive, in imagination, the scent of those good-natured leaves, which allow you to carry off their perfume on your fingers; for good-natured they are, in that respect above almost all plants, and fittest for the hospitalities of your rooms. The very feel of the leaf has a household warmth in it something analogous to clothing and comfort.

Why does not everybody (who can afford it) have a geranium in his window, or some other flower? It is very cheap; its cheapness is next to nothing if you raise it from seed, or from a slip; and it is a beauty and a companion. It sweetens the air, rejoices the eye, links you with nature and innocence, and is something to love. And if it cannot love you in return, it cannot hate you; it cannot utter a hateful thing, even for your neglecting it; for though it is all beauty, it has no vanity: and such being the case, and living as it does purely to do you good and afford you pleasure, how will you be able to neglect it?

But pray, if you choose a geranium, or possess but a few of them, let us persuade you to choose the scarlet kind, the "old original" geranium, and not a variety of it—not one of the numerous diversities of red and white, blue and white, ivy-leaved, etc. Those are all beautiful, and very fit to vary a large collection; but to prefer them to the originals of the race is to run the hazard of preferring the curious to the beautiful, and costliness to sound taste. It may be taken as a good general

rule, that the most popular plants are the best; for otherwise they would not have become such. And what the painters call "pure colours," are preferable to mixed ones, for reasons which Nature herself has given when she painted the sky of one colour, and the fields of another, and divided the rainbow itself into a few distinct hues, and made the red rose the queen of flowers. Variations of flowers are like variations in music, often beautiful as such, but almost always inferior to the theme on which they are founded—the original air. And the rule holds good in beds of flowers, if they be not very large, or in any other small assemblage of them. Nay, the largest bed will look well, if of one beautiful colour; while the most beautiful varieties may be inharmoniously mixed up. Contrast is a good thing, but we should first get a good sense of the thing to be contrasted, and we shall find this preferable to the contrast if we are not rich enough to have both in due measure. We do not in general love and honour any one single colour enough, and we are instinctively struck with a conviction to this effect when we see it abundantly set forth. The other day we saw a little garden-wall completely covered with nasturtiums, and felt how much more beautiful it was than if anything had been mixed with it. For the leaves, and the light and shade, offer variety enough. The rest is all richness and simplicity united —which is the triumph of an intense perception. Embower a cottage thickly and completely with nothing but roses, and nobody would desire the interference of another plant.

Everything is handsome about the geranium, not excepting its name; which cannot be said of all flowers, though we get to love ugly words when associated with pleasing ideas. The word "geranium" is soft and elegant; the meaning is poor, for it comes from a Greek word signifying a crane, the fruit having a form resembling that of a crane's head or bill. Crane's-bill is the English name of Geranium; though the learned appellation has superseded the vernacular. But what a reason for naming the *flower*! as if the fruit were anything in comparison, or any one cared about it. Such distinctions, it is true, are useful to botanists; but as plenty of learned names are sure to be reserved for the freemasonry of the science, it would be better for the world at large to invent joyous and beautiful names for these images of joy and beauty. In some instances, we have them; such as heart's-ease, honeysuckle, marigold, mignonette (little darling), daisy (day's-eye), etc. And many flowers are so lovely, and have associated names otherwise unmeaning so

pleasantly with one's memory, that no new ones would sound so well, or seem even to have such proper significations. In pronouncing the words, lilies, roses, pinks, tulips, jonquils, we see the things themselves, and seem to taste all their beauty and sweetness. "Pink," is a harsh petty word in itself, and yet assuredly it does not seem so; for in the word we have the flower. It would be difficult to persuade ourselves that the word *rose* is not very beautiful. "Pea" is a poor Chinese-like monosyllable, and "Briar" is rough and fierce, as it ought to be; but when we think of *Sweet-pea* and *Sweet-briar*, the words appear quite worthy of their epithets. The poor monosyllable becomes rich in sweetness and appropriation; the rough dissyllable also; and the sweeter for its contrast. But what can be said in behalf of liver-wort, blood-wort, dragon's head, devil's bit, and devil in a bush? There was a charming line in some verses in last week's *London Journal*, written by a lady.

> I've marr'd your blisses,
> Those sweete kisses
> That the young breeze so loved yesterdaye!
> I've seen ye sighing,
> Now ye're dying;—
> *How could I take your prettie lives away?*

But you could not say this to dragon's head and devil's bit:

> O dragon's head, devil's bit, blood-wort,—say,
> How could I take your pretty lives away?

This would be like Dryden's version of the pig-squeaking in Chaucer:

> Poor swine! as if their pretty hearts would break.

The names of flowers in general among the polite, are neither pretty in themselves, nor give us information. The country people are apt to do them more justice. Goldylocks, ladies'-fingers, bright-eye, rose-a-rubie, shepherd's-clock, shepherd's-purse, sauce-alone, scarlet runners, sops-in-wine, sweet-william, etc., give us some ideas either useful or pleasant. But from the peasantry also come many uncongenial names, as bad as those of the botanists. Some of the latter are handsome as well as learned, have meanings easily found out by a little reading or scholarship, and are taking their place accordingly in popular nomenclatures: as amaranth, adonis, arbutus, asphodel, etc., but many others are as ugly as they are far-fetched, such as colchicum, tagetes, yucca, ixia, mesembryanthemum; and as to the Adansonias, Browallias, Koempferias, John Tomkinsias,

or whatever the personal names may be that are bestowed at the botanical font by their proud discoverers or godfathers, we have a respect for botanists and their pursuits, and wish them all sorts of "little immortalities" except these: unless they could unite them with something illustrative of the flower as well as themselves. A few, certainly, we should not like to displace, Browallia for one, which was given to a Peruvian flower by Linnæus, in honour of a friend of his of the name of Browall; but the name should have included some idea of the thing named. The Browallia is remarkable for its brilliancy. "We cannot," says Mr. Curtis, "do it justice by any colours we have."[1] Now why not have called it Browall's Beauty, or Browall's Inimitable? The other day we were *admiring* an enormously beautiful apple, and were told it was called "Kirk's *Admirable*," after the gardener who raised it. We felt the propriety of this name directly. It was altogether to the purpose. There was use and beauty together—the name of the raiser and the excellence of the fruit raised. It is a pity that all fruits and flowers, and animals too, except those with good names, could not be passed in review before somebody with a genius for christening, as the creatures did before Adam in Paradise, and so have new names given them, worthy of their creation.

Suppose flowers themselves were new! Suppose they had just come into the world, a sweet reward for some new goodness; and that we had not yet seen them quite developed; that they were in the act of growing; had just issued with their green stalks out of the ground, and engaged the attention of the curious. Imagine what we should feel when we saw the first lateral stem bearing off from the main one, or putting forth a leaf. How we should watch the leaf gradually unfolding its little graceful hand; then another, then another; then the main stalk rising and producing more; then one of them giving indications of an astonishing novelty, a bud! then this mysterious, lovely bud gradually unfolding like the leaf, amazing us, enchanting us, almost alarming us with delight, as if we knew not what enchantment were to ensue: till at length, in all its fairy beauty, and odorous voluptuousness, and mysterious elaboration of tender and living sculpture, shone forth

the bright consummate flower!

Yet this phenomenon, to a mind of any thought and loving-

[1] We learn this from the *Flora Domestica*, an elegant and poetry-loving book, specially intended for cultivators of flowers at home.

ness, is what may be said to take place every day; for the commonest objects are only wonders at which habit has made us cease to wonder, and the marvellousness of which we may renew at pleasure, by *taking thought*. Last spring, walking near some cultivated grounds, and seeing a multitude of green stalks peeping forth, we amused ourselves with likening them to the plumes or other headgear of fairies, and wondering what faces might ensue; and from this exercise of the fancy, we fell to considering how true, and not merely fanciful, those speculations were; what a perpetual reproduction of the marvellous was carried on by Nature; how utterly ignorant we were of the causes of the least and most disesteemed of the commonest vegetables; and what a quantity of life, and beauty, and mystery, and use, and enjoyment, was to be found in them, composed out of all sorts of elements, and shaped as if by the hands of fairies. What workmanship, with no apparent workman! What consummate elegance, though the result was to be nothing (as we call it) but a radish or an onion, and these were to be consumed, or thrown away by millions! A rough tree grows up, and at the tips of his rugged and dark fingers he puts forth—round, smooth, shining, and hanging delicately—the golden apple, or the cheek-like beauty of the peach. The other day we were in a garden where Indian corn was growing, and some of the cobs were plucked to show us. First one leaf or sheaf was picked off, then another, then another, then a fourth, and so on, as if a fruitseller was unpacking fruit out of papers; and at last we came, inside, to the grains of the corn, packed up into cucumber-shapes of pale gold, and each of them pressed and flattened against each other, as if some human hand had been doing it in the caverns of the earth. But What Hand!

The same that made the poor yet rich hand (for is it not his workmanship also?) that is tracing these marvelling lines, and which if it does not tremble to write them, it is because Love sustains, and because the heart also is a flower which has a right to be tranquil in the garden of the All-Wise.

A DUSTY DAY

Among the "Miseries of Human Life," as a wit pleasantly entitled them, there are few, while the rascal is about it, worse than a Great Cloud of Dust, coming upon you in street or road, you having no means of escape, and the carriages, or flock of sheep, evidently being bent on imparting to you a full share of their besetting horror. The road is too narrow to leave you a choice, even if it had two pathways, which it has not:—the day is hot; the wind is whisking; you have come out in stockings instead of boots, not being aware that you were occasionally to have two feet depth of dust to walk in:—*now*, now the dust is on you—you are enveloped—you are blind; you have to hold your hat on against the wind: the carriages grind by, or the sheep go pattering along, baaing through all the notes of their poor gamut; perhaps carriages and sheep are together, the latter eschewing the horses' legs, and the shepherd's dog driving against your own, and careering over the woolly backs:—Whew! What a dusting!—What a blinding!—What a whirl! The noise decreases; you stop; you look about you; gathering up your hat, coat, and faculties, after apologising to the gentleman against whom you have "lumped," and who does not look a bit the happier for your apology. The dust is in your eyes, in your hair, in your shoes and stockings, in your neck-cloth, in your mouth. You grind your teeth in dismay, and find them gritty.

Perhaps another carriage is coming; and you, finding yourself in the middle of the road, and being resolved to be master of, at least, this inferior horror, turn about towards the wall or paling, and propose to make your way accordingly, and have the dust behind your back instead of in front; when lo! you begin sneezing, and cannot see. You have taken involuntary snuff.

Or you suddenly discern a street, down which you can turn, which you do with rapture, thinking to get out of wind and dust at once; when, unfortunately, you discover that the wind is veering to all points of the compass, and that, instead of avoiding the dust, there is a ready-made and intense collection of it, then in the act of being swept into your eyes by the attendants on a——dust-cart!

The reader knows what sort of a day we speak of. It is all dusty;—the windows are dusty; the people are dusty; the

hedges in the roads are horribly dusty—pitiably—you think they must feel it; shoes and boots are like a baker's: men on horseback eat and drink dust; coachmen sit screwing up their eyes; the gardener finds his spade slip into the ground, fetching up smooth portions of earth, all made of dust. What is the poor pedestrian to do?

To think of something *superior* to the dust—whether grave or gay. This is the secret of being master of any ordinary, and of much extraordinary trouble—bring a better idea upon it, and it is hard if the greater thought does not do something against the less. When we meet with any very unpleasant person, to whose ways we cannot suddenly reconcile ourselves, we think of some delightful friend, perhaps two hundred miles off—in Northumberland, or in Wales. When dust threatens to blind us, we shut our eyes to the disaster, and contrive to philosophise a bit even then.

"Oh, but it is not worth while doing that."

Good. If so, there is nothing to do but to be as jovial as the dust itself, and take all gaily. Indeed, this is the philosophy we speak of.

"And yet the dust is annoying too."

Well—take then just as much good sense as you require for the occasion. Think of a jest; think of a bit of verse; think of the dog you saw just now, coming out of the pond, and frightening the dandy in his new trousers. But at all events don't let your temper be mastered by such a thing as a cloud of dust. It will show, either that you have a very infirm temper indeed, or no ideas in your head.

On all occasions in life, great or small, you may be the worse for them, or the better. You may be made the weaker or the stronger by them; ay, even by so small a thing as a little dust.

When the famous Arbuthnot was getting into his carriage one day, he was beset with dust. What did he do? Damn the dust or the coachman? No; that was not his fashion. He was a wit, and a good-natured man; so he fell to making an epigram, which he sent to his friends. It was founded on scientific knowledge, and consisted of the following pleasant exaggeration:

ON A DUSTY DAY

The dust in smaller particles arose,
Than those which fluid bodies do compose.
Contraries in extremes do often meet;
It was so dry that you might call it wet.

Dust at a distance sometimes takes a burnished or tawny

aspect in the sun, almost as handsome as the great yellow smoke out of breweries; and you may amuse your fancy with thinking of the clouds that precede armies in the old books of poetry—the spears gleaming out—the noise of the throng growing on the ear—and, at length, horses emerging, and helmets and flags—the Lion of King Richard, or the Lilies of France.

Or you may think of some better and more harmless palm of victory, "not without dust" (*palma non sine pulvere*); dust, such as Horace says the horsemen of antiquity liked to kick up at the Olympic games, or as he more elegantly phrases it, "collect" (*collegisse juvat*—which a punster of our acquaintance translated, "kicking up a dust at college"); or if you are in a very philosophic vein indeed, you may think of man's derivation from dust, and his return to it, redeeming your thoughts from gloom by the hopes beyond dust, and by the graces which poetry and the affections have shed upon it in this life, like flowers upon graves—lamenting with the tender Petrarch, that "those eyes of which he spoke so warmly," and that golden hair, and "the lightning of that angel smile," and all those other beauties which made him a lover "marked out from among men"—a being abstracted "from the rest of his species," are now "a little dust, without a feeling"—

Poca polvere son che nulla sente—

or repeating that beautiful lyric of the last of the Shakespearian men, Shirley, which they say touched even the thoughtless bosom of Charles the Second:

DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST

The glories of our birth and state
  Are shadows, not substantial things,
There is no armour against fate;
  Death lays his icy hand on kings:
    Sceptre and crown
    Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field
  And plant fresh laurels where they kill:
But their strong nerves at last must yield,
  They tame but one another still.
    Early or late
    They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath,
  When they, pale captives, creep to death.

> The garlands wither on your brow,
> Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
> Upon death's purple altar now
> See where the *victor-victim* bleeds:
> All heads must come
> To the cold tomb:
> *Only the actions of the just*
> *Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.*

Most true; but with the leave of the fine poet (which he would gladly have conceded to us), Death's conquest is not "final"; for Heaven triumphs over him, and Love too, and Poetry; and thus we can get through the cloud even of his dust, and shake it, in aspiration, from our wings. Besides, we know not, with any exactitude, what or who Death is, or whether there is any such personage, even in his negative sense, except inasmuch as he is a gentle voice, calling upon us to go some journey; for the very dust that he is supposed to deal in is alive; is the cradle of other beings and vegetation; nay, its least particle belongs to a mighty life—is planetary—is part of our star—is the stuff of which the worlds are made, that roll and rejoice round the sun.

Of these or the like reflections, serious or otherwise, are the cogitations of the true pedestrian composed—such are the weapons with which he triumphs over the most hostile of his clouds, whether material or metaphorical; and, at the end of his dusty walk, he beholdeth, in beautiful perspective, the towel, and the basin and water, with which he will render his eyes, cheeks, and faculties, as cool and fresh, as if no dust had touched them; nay, more so, *for the contrast.* Never forget that secret of the reconcilements of this life. To sit down, newly washed and dressed, after a dusty journey, and hear that dinner is to be ready "in ten minutes," is a satisfaction—"a crowning and measureless content"—which we hope no one will enjoy who does not allow fair play between the harmless lights and shadows of existence, and treat his dust with respect. We defy him to enjoy it, at any rate, like those who do. His ill-temper, somehow or other, will rise in retribution against him, and find dust on his saddle of mutton.

THE EAST-WIND

DID anybody ever hear of the East-Wind when he was a boy? We remember no such thing. We never heard a word about it, all the time we were at school. There was the schoolmaster with his *ferula*, but there was no East-Wind. Our elders might have talked about it, but such calamities of theirs are inaudible in the ears of the juvenile. A fine day was a fine day, let the wind be in what quarter it might. While writing this article, we hear everybody complaining, that the fine weather is polluted by the presence of the East-Wind. It has lasted so long as to force itself upon people's attention. The ladies confess their exasperation with it, for making free without being agreeable; and as ladies' quarrels are to be taken up, and there is no other way of grappling with this invisible enemy, we have put ourselves in a state of Editorial resentment, and have resolved to write an article against it.

The winds are among the most mysterious of the operations of the elements. We know not whence they come, or whither they go—how they spring up, or how fall—why they prevail so long, after such and such a fashion, in certain quarters; nor, above all, why some of them should be at once so lasting and apparently so pernicious. We know some of their users; but there is a great deal about them we do not know, and it is difficult to put them to the question. As the sailor said of the ghosts, "we do not understand their tackle." What is very curious is, there seems to be one of them which prevails in some particular quarter, and has a character for malignity. In the South there is the *Scirocco*, an ugly customer, dark, close, suffocating, making melancholy; which blots the sky, and dejects the spirits of the most lively. In the Oriental parts of the earth, there is the Tifoon, supposed by some to be the Typhon, or Evil Principle of the ancients; and in Europe we have the East-Wind, whom the ancients reckoned among the Sons of Typhon. The winds, Mr. Keightley tells us, were divided by the Greeks into *wholesome* and *noxious*; the former of which, Boreas (North-Wind), Zephyrus (West-Wind), and Notus (South-Wind), were, according to Hesiod, the children of Astræus (*Starry*) and Eos (*Dawn*). The other winds, he says (probably meaning only those who blow from the East), are the race of Typhoëus, whom he describes as the last and most terrible child of earth. In Greece, as over the rest of Europe, the East-Wind was pernicious."

In England, the East-Wind is accounted pernicious if it last long; and it is calculated, we believe, that it blows during three parts even of our fine weather. We have known a single blast of it blight a long row of plants in a greenhouse. Its effects upon the vegetable creation are sure to be visible if it last any time; and it puts invalids into a very unpleasant state, by drying the pores of the skin, and thus giving activity to those numerous internal disorders, of which none are more painful than what the moderns call nervousness, and our fathers understood by the name of the Vapours or the "Spleen," which, as Shenstone observed, is often little else than obstructed perspiration. An irritable poet exclaimed:

> Scarce in a showerless day the heavens indulge
> Our melting clime, except the baleful East
> Withers the tender spring, and sourly checks
> The fancy of the year. Our fathers talk'd
> Of summers, balmy airs, and skies serene:
> Good Heaven! for what unexpiated crimes
> This dismal change?

This terrible question we shall answer presently. Meantime, the suffering poet may be allowed to have been a little irritated. It is certainly provoking to have this invisible enemy invading a whole nation at his will, and sending among us, for weeks together, his impertinent and cutting influence, drying up our skins, blowing dust in our eyes, contradicting our sunshine, smoking our suburbs, behaving boisterously to our women, aggravating our scolds, withering up our old gentlemen and ladies, nullifying the respite from smoke at Bow, perplexing our rooms between hot and cold, closing up our windows, exasperating our rheumatisms, basely treating the wounds of our old soldiers, spoiling our gardens, preventing our voyages, assisting thereby our Bow Street runners, hurting our tempers, increasing our melancholies, deteriorating our night-airs, showing our wives' ankles, disordering our little children, not being good for our beasts, perplexing our pantaloons (to know which to put on), deranging our ringlets, scarifying our eyes, thinning our apple-tarts, endangering our dances, getting damned our weathercocks, barbarising our creditors, incapacitating our debtors, obstructing all moist processes in the arts, hindering our astronomers,[1] tiring our editors, and endangering our sales.

The poet asks what crimes could have brought upon us the evils of our climate? He should ask the schoolboy that runs

[1] During East-Winds astronomers are unable to pursue their observations, on account of a certain hazy motion in the air.

about, the gipsy who laughs at the climate, or the ghost of some old English yeoman, before taxes and sedentary living abounded. An East-Wind, like every other evil, except folly and ill intention, is found, when properly grappled with, to be not only no evil, but a good, at least a negative one, sometimes a positive; and even folly and ill intention are but the mistakes of a community in its progress from bad to good. How evil comes at all, we cannot say. It suffices us to believe, that it is in its nature fugitive; and that it is the nature of good, when good returns, to outlast it beyond all calculation. If we led the natural lives to which we hope and believe that the advance of knowledge and comfort will bring us round, we should feel the East-Wind as little as the gipsies do: it would be the same refreshment to us that it is to the glowing schoolboy, after his exercise; and as to nipping our fruits and flowers, some living creature makes a dish of them, if we do not. With these considerations, we should be well content to recognise the *concordia discors* that harmonises the inanimate creation. If it were not for the East-Wind in this country, we should probably have too much wet. Our winters would not dry up; our June fields would be impassable: we should not be able to enjoy the West-Wind itself, the Zephyr with its lap full of flowers. And upon the supposition that there is no peril in the East-Wind that may not ultimately be nullified, we need not trouble ourselves with the question, why the danger of excessive moisture must be counteracted by a wind full of dryness. All the excesses of the elements will one day be pastime, for the healthy arms and discerning faculties of discovering man.

And so we finish our vituperations in the way in which such things ought generally to be finished, with a discovery that the fault objected to is in ourselves, and renewed admiration of the abundance of promise in all the works of nature.

AUTUMNAL COMMENCEMENT OF FIRES

How pleasant it is to have fires again! We have not time to regret summer, when the cold fogs begin to force us upon the necessity of a new kind of warmth; a warmth not so fine as sunshine, but, as manners go, more sociable. The English get together over their fires, as the Italians do in their summer-shade. We do not enjoy our sunshine as we ought; our climate

seems to render us almost unaware that the weather is fine, when it really becomes so: but for the same reason, we make as much of our winter, as the anti-social habits that have grown upon us from other causes will allow. And for a similar reason, the southern European is unprepared for a cold day. The houses in many parts of Italy are summer-houses, unprepared for winter; so that when a fit of cold weather comes, the dismayed inhabitant, walking and shivering about with a little brazier in his hands, presents an awkward image of insufficiency and perplexity. A few of our fogs, shutting up the sight of everything out of doors, and making the trees and the eaves of the houses drip like rain, would admonish him to get warm in good earnest. If "the web of our life" is always to be "of a mingled yarn," a good warm hearth-rug is not the worst part of the manufacture.

Here we are then again, with our fire before us, and our books on each side. What shall we do? Shall we take out a Life of somebody, or a Theocritus, or Petrarch, or Ariosto, or Montaigne, or Marcus Aurelius, or Molière, or Shakespeare, who includes them all? Or shall we *read* an engraving from Poussin or Raphael? Or shall we sit with tilted chairs, planting our wrists upon our knees, and toasting the up-turned palms of our hands, while we discourse of manners and of man's heart and hopes, with at least a sincerity, a good intention, and good-nature, that shall warrant what we say with the sincere, the good-intentioned, and the good-natured?

Ah—take care. You see what that old-looking saucer is, with a handle to it? It is a venerable piece of earthenware, which may have been worth, to an Athenian, about twopence; but to an author, is worth a great deal more than ever he could —deny for it. And yet he would deny it too. It will fetch his imagination more than ever it fetched potter or penny-maker. Its little shallow circle overflows for him with the milk and honey of a thousand pleasant associations. This is one of the uses of having mantelpieces. You may often see on no very rich mantelpiece a representative body of all the elements physical and intellectual—a shell for the sea, a stuffed bird or some feathers for the air, a curious piece of mineral for the earth, a glass of water with some flowers in it for the visible process of creation—a cast from sculpture for the mind of man—and underneath all, is the bright and ever-springing fire, running up through them heavenwards, like hope through materiality. We like to have any little curiosity of the mantelpiece kind

within our reach and inspection. For the same reason, we like a small study, where we are almost in contact with our books. We like to feel them about us—to be in the arms of our mistress Philosophy, rather than see her at a distance. To have a huge apartment for a study is like lying in the great bed at Ware, or being snug on a mile-stone upon Hounslow Heath. It is space and physical activity, not repose and concentration. It is fit only for grandeur and ostentation—for those who have secretaries, and are to be approached like gods in a temple. The Archbishop of Toledo, no doubt, wrote his homilies in a room ninety feet long. The Marquis Marialva must have been approached by Gil Blas through whole ranks of glittering authors, standing at due distance. But Ariosto, whose mind could fly out of its nest over all nature, wrote over the house he built, "*parva, sed apta mihi*"—small, but suited to me. However, it is to be observed, that he could not afford a larger. He was a Duodenarian, in that respect, like ourselves. We do not know how our ideas of a study might expand with our walls. Montaigne, who was Montaigne "of that ilk" and lord of a great chateau, had a study "sixteen paces in diameter, with three noble and free prospects." He congratulates himself, at the same time, on its circular figure, evidently from a feeling allied to the one in favour of smallness. "The figure of my study," says he, "is round, and has no more flat (bare) wall, than what is taken up by my table and my chairs; so that the remaining parts of the circle present me with a view of all my books at once, set upon five degrees of shelves round about me" (Cotton's *Montaigne*, Bk. III, ch. iii).

A great prospect we hold to be a very disputable advantage, upon the same reasoning as before; but we like to have some green boughs about our windows, and to fancy ourselves as much as possible in the country, when we are not there. Milton expressed a wish with regard to his study, extremely suitable to our present purpose. He would have the lamp in it *seen*; thus letting others into a share of his enjoyments, by the imagination of them.

> And let my lamp at midnight hour
> Be *seen* in some high lonely tower,
> Where I may oft outwatch the Bear
> With thrice-great Hermes; or unsphere
> The Spirit of Plato, to unfold
> What world or what vast regions hold
> The immortal mind, that hath forsook
> Her mansion in this fleshly nook.

There is a fine passionate burst of enthusiasm on the subject

of a study, in Fletcher's play of the *Elder Brother*,[1] Act I, Scene ii:

> Sordid and dunghill minds, composed of earth,
> In that gross element fix all their happiness:
> But purer spirits, purged and refined,
> Shake off that clog of human frailty. Give me
> Leave to enjoy myself. That place, that does
> Contain my books, the best companions, is
> To me a glorious court, where hourly I
> Converse with the old sages and philosophers;
> And sometimes for variety I confer
> With kings and emperors, and weigh their counsels;
> Calling their victories, if unjustly got,
> Unto a strict account; and in my fancy,
> Deface their ill-placed statues. Can I then
> Part with such constant pleasures, to embrace
> Uncertain vanities? No, be it your care
> To augment a heap of wealth: it shall be mine
> To increase in knowledge. Lights there, for my study.

COUNTRY LITTLE KNOWN

We have to inform the public of a remarkable discovery, which, though partially disclosed by former travellers, has still remained, for the most part, a strange secret. It is this—that there is actually, at this present moment, and in this our own beautiful country of Great Britain, a large tract of territory, which to nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of our beloved countrymen is as much an undiscovered land as the other end of New South Wales, or the Pole which they have gone to find out. We have read of places in romance, which were more shut out by magic from people's eyes, though close to them, than if a fifty-foot wall encircled them. It would seem as if some such supernatural prohibition existed with regard to the land in question; for the extremities of it reach to within a short distance from the Metropolis, which it surrounds on all sides; nay, we have heard of persons riding through it, without seeing anything but a signpost or some corn; and yet it is so beautiful, that it is called emphatically "The Country."

It abounds in the finest natural productions. The more majestic parts of it are at a distance; but the zealous explorer may come upon its gentler beauties in an incredibly short time. Its pasture and cattle are admirable. Deer are to be met with in the course of half a day's journey; and the traveller is accom-

panied, wherever he goes, with the music of singing birds. Immediately towards the south is a noble river, which brings you to an upland of the most luxuriant description, looking in the water like a rich-haired beauty in her glass: yet the place is in general solitary. Towards the north, at a less distance, are some other hilly spots of ground, which partake more of the rudely romantic, running however into scenes of the like sylvan elegance; and yet these are still more solitary. The inhabitants of these lands, called the Country-People, seem, in truth, pretty nearly as blind to their merits as those who never see them; but their perceptions will doubtless increase, in proportion as their polished neighbours set the example. It should be said for them, that some causes, with which we have nothing to do in this place, have rendered them duller to such impressions than they appear to have been a century or two ago; but we repeat, that they will not live in such scenes to no purpose, if those who know better, take an interest in their improvement. Their children have an instinct that is wiser, till domestic cares do it away. They may be seen in the fields and green lanes, with their curly locks and brown faces, gathering the flowers which abound there, and the names of which are as pretty as the shapes and colours. They are called wild roses, primroses, violets, the rose campion, germander, stellaria, wild anemone, bird's-eye, daisies and buttercups, lady-smocks, ground-ivy, hare-bells or blue-bells, wake-robin, lilies of the valley, etc. The trees are oaks, elms, birches, ash, poplar, willow, wild cherry, the flowering maybush, etc., all, in short, that we dote upon in pictures, and wish that we had about us when it is hot in Cheapside and Bond Street. It is perfectly transporting in fine weather, like the present, for instance, to lounge under the hedgerow elms in one of these sylvan places, and see the light smoke of the cottages fuming up among the green trees, the cattle grazing or lying about with a heavy placidity accordant to the time and scene, "painted jays" glancing about the glens, the gentle hills sloping down into water, the winding embowered lanes, the leafy and flowery banks, the green oaks against the blue sky, their ivied trunks, the silver-bodied and young-haired birches, and the mossy grass treble-carpeted after the vernal rains. Transporting is it to see all this, and transporting to hear the linnets, thrushes, and blackbirds, the grave gladness of the bee, and the stock-dove "brooding over her own sweet voice." And more transporting than all is it to be in such places with a friend that feels

like ourselves, in whose heart and eyes (especially if they have fair lids), we may see all our own happiness doubled, as the landscape itself is reflected in the waters.

OF THE SIGHT OF SHOPS

THOUGH we are such lovers of the country, we can admire London in some points of view; and among others, from the entertainment to be derived from its shops. Their variety and brilliancy can hardly fail of attracting the most sluggish attention: and besides reasons of this kind, we can never look at some of them without thinking of the gallant figure they make in the *Arabian Nights*, with their bazaars and bezesteins; where the most beautiful of unknowns goes shopping in a veil, and the most graceful of drapers is taken blindfold to see her. He goes, too smitten at heart to think of the danger of his head; and finds her seated among her slaves (exquisite themselves, only very inferior), upon which she encourages him to sit near her, and lutes are played; upon which he sighs, and cannot help looking tenderly; upon which she claps her hands, and a charming collation is brought in; upon which they eat, but not much. A dance ensues, and the ocular sympathy is growing tenderer, when an impossible old woman appears, and says that the Sultan is coming. Alas! How often have we been waked up, in the person of the young draper or jeweller, by that ancient objection! How have we received the lady in the veil, through which we saw nothing but her dark eyes and rosy cheeks! How have we sat cross-legged on cushions, hearing or handling the lute, whose sounds faded away like our enamoured eyes! How often have we not lost our hearts and left hands, like one of the Calenders? Or an eye, like another? Or a head; and resumed it at the end of the story? Or slept (no, not slept) in the Sultan's garden at Schiraz with the fair Persian?

But to return (as well as such enamoured persons can) to our shops. We prefer the country a million times over for walking in general, especially if we have the friends in it that enjoy it as well; but there are seasons when the very streets may vie with it. If you have been solitary, for instance, for a long time, it is pleasant to get among your fellow-creatures again, even to be jostled and elbowed. If you live in town, and the weather is showery, you may get out in the intervals of rain,

and then a quickly-dried pavement and a set of brilliant shops are pleasant. Nay, we have known days, even in spring, when a street shall outdo the finest aspects of the country; but then it is only when the ladies are abroad, and there happens to be a run of agreeable faces that day. For whether it is fancy or not, or whether certain days do not rather bring out certain people, it is a common remark, that one morning you shall meet a succession of good looks, and another encounter none but the reverse. We do not merely speak of handsome faces; but of those which are charming, or otherwise, whatever be the cause. We suppose, that the money-takers are all abroad one day, and the heart-takers the other.

It is to be observed, that we are not speaking of utility in this article, except indeed the great utility of agreeableness. A candid leather-cutter therefore will pardon us, if we do not find anything very attractive in his premises. So will his friend the shoemaker, who is bound to like us rural pedestrians. A stationer too, on obvious accounts, will excuse us for thinking his a very dull and bald-headed business. We cannot bear the horribly neat monotony of his shelves, with their load of virgin paper, their slates and slate-pencils that set one's teeth on edge, their pocket-books, and above all, their detestable ruled account-books, which at once remind one of the necessity of writing, and the impossibility of writing anything pleasant on such pages. The only agreeable thing, in a stationer's shop, when it has it, is the ornamental work, the card-racks, hand-screens, etc., which remind us of the fair morning fingers that paste and gild such things, and surprise their aunts with presents of flowery boxes. But we grieve to add, that the prints which the stationers furnish for such elegancies, are not in the very highest taste. They are apt to deviate too scrupulously from the originals. Their well-known heads become too anonymous. Their young ladies have casts in their eyes, a little too much on one side even for the sidelong divinities of Mr. Harlowe.

In a hatter's shop we can see nothing but the hats; and the reader is acquainted with our pique against them. The beaver is a curious animal, but the idea of it is not entertaining enough to convert a window full of those requisite nuisances into an agreeable spectacle. It is true, a hatter, like some other tradesmen, may be pleasanter himself, by reason of the adversity of his situation. We cannot say more for the *cruel*-shop next door—a name justly provocative of a pun. It is customary,

however, to have sign-paintings of Adam and Eve at these places; which is some relief to the monotony of the windows; only they remind us but too well of these cruel necessities to which they brought us. The baker's next ensuing is a very dull shop, much inferior to the gingerbread baker's, whose parliament we used to munch at school. The tailor's makes one as melancholy to look at it, as the sedentary persons within. The hosier's is worse; particularly if it has a Golden Leg over it; for that precious limb is certainly not symbolical of the weaver's. The windows, half board and half dusty glass, which abound in the City, can scarcely be turned to a purpose of amusement, even by the most attic of drysalters. We own we have half a longing to break them, and let in the light of nature upon their recesses; whether they belong to those more piquant gentlemen, or to bankers, or any other high and wholesale personages. A light in one of these windows in the morning is, to us, one of the very dismallest reflections on humanity. We wish we could say something for a tallow-chandler's, because everybody abuses it: but we cannot. It must bear its fate like the man. A good deal might be said in behalf of candlelight; but in passing from shop to shop, the variety is so great, that the imagination has not time to dwell on any one in particular. The ideas they suggest must be obvious and on the surface. A grocer's and a tea-dealer's is a good thing. It fills the mind instantly with a variety of pleasant tastes, as the ladies in Italy on certain holidays pelt the gentlemen with sweetmeats. An undertaker's is as great a balk to one's spirits, as a loose stone to one's foot. It gives one a deadly jerk. But it is pleasant upon the whole to see the inhabitant looking carelessly out of doors, or hammering while humming a tune; for why should he die a death at every fresh order for a coffin? An undertaker walking merrily drunk by the side of a hearse, is a horrid object; but an undertaker singing and hammering in his shop, is only rapping Death himself on the knuckles. The dead are not there; the altered fellow-creature is not there; but only the living man, and the abstract idea of death; and he may defy that as much as he pleases. An apothecary's is the more deadly thing of the two; for the coffin may be made for a good old age, but the draught and the drug are for the sickly. An apothecary's looks well however at night-time, on account of the coloured glasses. It is curious to see two or three people talking together in the light of one of them, and looking profoundly blue. There are two good things in the Italian warehouse—its name and its

olives; but it is chiefly built up of gout. Nothing can be got out of a brazier's windows, except by a thief: but we understand that it is a good place to live at for those who cannot procure water-falls. A music-shop with its windows full of title-pages, is provokingly insipid to look at, considering the quantity of slumbering enchantment inside, which only wants waking. A bookseller's is interesting, especially if the books are very old or very new, and have frontispieces. But let no author, with or without money in his pocket, trust himself in the inside, unless, like the bookseller, he has too much at home. An author is like a baker; it is for him to make the sweets, and others to buy and enjoy them. And yet not so. Let us not blaspheme the "divinity that stirs within us." The old comparison of the bee is better; for even if his toil at last is his destruction, and he is killed in order to be plundered, he has had the range of nature before he dies. His has been the summer air, and the sunshine, and the flowers; and gentle ears have listened to him, and gentle eyes have been upon him. Let others eat his honey that please, so that he has had his morsel and his song. A bookstall is better for an author than a regular shop; for the books are cheaper, the choice often better and more ancient; and he may look at them, and move on without the horrors of not buying anything; unless indeed the master or mistress stands looking at him from the shop-door; which is a vile practice. It is necessary, we suppose, to guard against pilferers; but then ought not a stall-keeper, of any perception, to know one of us real magnanimous spoilers of our gloves from a sordid thief? A tavern and coffee-house is a pleasant sight, from its sociality; not to mention the illustrious club memories of the times of Shakespeare and the Tatlers. We confess that the commonest public-house in town is not such an eyesore to us as it is to some. There may be a little too much drinking and roaring going on in the middle of the week; but what, in the meantime, are pride, and avarice, and all the unsocial vices about? Before we object to public-houses, and above all, to their Saturday evening recreations, we must alter the systems that make them a necessary comfort to the poor and laborious. Till then, in spite of the vulgar part of the polite, we shall have an esteem for the "Devil and the Bag o' Nails"; and like to hear, as we go along on Saturday night, the applauding knocks on the table that follow the song of "Lovely Nan," or "Brave Captain Death," or "Tobacco is an Indian Weed," or "Why, Soldiers, why?" or "Says Plato, why

should man be vain," or that judicious and unanswerable ditty commencing:

> Now what can man more desire
> Nor sitting by a sea-coal fire:
> And on his knees, etc.

We will even refuse to hear anything against a gin-shop, till the various systems of the moralists and economists are discussed, and the virtuous leave off seduction and old port. In the meantime, we give up to anybody's dislike the butcher's and fishmonger's. And yet see how things go by comparison! We remember, in our boyhood, a lady from the West Indies, of a very delicate and high-bred nature, who could find nothing about our streets that more excited her admiration than the butchers' shops. She had no notion, from what she had seen in her own country, that so ugly a business could be carried on with so much neatness, and become actually passable. An open potato shop is a dull bleak-looking place, except in the height of summer. A cheesemonger's is then at its height of annoyance, unless you see a pavior or bricklayer coming out with his three penn'orth on his bread—a better sight than the glutton's waddling away from the fishmonger's. A poulterer's is a dead-bodied business, with its birds and their lax necks. We dislike to see a bird anywhere but in the open air, alive and quick. Of all creatures, restraint and death become its winged vivacity the least. For the same reason we hate aviaries. Dog-shops are tolerable. A cook-shop does not mingle the agreeable with the useful. We hate its panes, with *Ham and Beef* scratched upon them in white letters. An ivory-turner's is pleasant, with its red and white chessmen, and little big-headed Indians on elephants; so is a toy-shop, with its endless delights for children. A coach-maker's is not disagreeable, if you can see the painting and panels. An umbrella-shop only reminds one of a rainy day, unless it is a shop for sticks also, which as we have already shown are meritorious articles. The curiosity-shop is sometimes very amusing, with its mandarins, stuffed birds, odd old carved faces, and a variety of things as indescribable as bits of dreams. The greengrocer carries his recommendation in his epithet. The hairdressers are also interesting as far as their hair goes, but not as their heads—we mean the heads in their windows. One of the shops we like least is an angling repository, with its rod for a sign, and a fish dancing in the agonies of death at the end of it. We really cannot see what equanimity there is in jerking a lacerated carp out of water by the jaws,

merely because it has not the power of making a noise; for we presume that the most philosophic of anglers would hardly delight in catching shrieking fish. An optician's is not very amusing, unless it has those reflecting-glasses in which you see your face run off on each side into attenuated width, or upwards and downwards in the same manner, in dreary longitude. A saddler's is good, because it reminds one of horses. A Christian swordmaker's or gunmaker's is edifying. A glass-shop is a beautiful spectacle; it reminds one of the splendours of a fairy palace. We like a blacksmith's for the sturdy looks and thumpings of the men, the swarthy colour, the fiery sparkles and the thunder-breathing throat of the furnace. Of other houses of traffic, not common in the streets, there is something striking to us in the large, well-conditioned horses of the brewers, and the rich smoke rolling from out their chimneys. We also greatly admire a wharf, with its boats, barrels, and packages, and the fresh air from the water, not to mention the smell of pitch. It carries us at once a hundred miles over the water. For similar reasons the crabbedest old lane has its merits in our eyes, if there is a sail-maker's in it or a boat-builder's and water at the end. How used old Roberts of Lambeth to gratify the aspiring modesty of our schoolcoats, when he welcomed us down to his wherries and captains on a holiday, and said, "Blue against Black at any time," meaning the Westminster boys! And the colleges will ratify his praise, taking into consideration the difference of the numbers that go there from either cloisters. But of all shops in the streets a print-seller's pleases us the most. We would rather pay a shilling to Mr. Colnaghi, Mr. Molteno, or Messieurs Moon and Boys, to look at their windows on one of their best-furnished days, than we would for many on exhibition. We can see fine engravings there, translations from Raphael and Titian, which are newer than hundreds of originals. We do not despise a pastry-cook's, though we would rather not eat tarts and puffs before the half-averted face of the prettiest of accountants, especially with a beggar watching and praying all the while at the door. We need not expatiate on the beauties of a florist's, where you see unwithering leaves, and roses made immortal. A dress warehouse is sometimes really worth stopping at, for its flowered draperies and richly-coloured shawls. But one's pleasure is apt to be disturbed (ye powers of gallantry! bear witness to the unwilling pen that writes it) by the fair faces that come forth, and the half-polite, half-execrating expression of the tradesman that bows them out; for here takes

place the chief enjoyment of the mystery yclept shopping; and here, while some ladies give the smallest trouble unwillingly, others have an infinity of things turned over, for the mere purpose of wasting their own time and the shopman's. We have read of a choice of a wife by cheese. It is difficult to speak of preference in such matters, and all such single modes of trial must be something equivocal; but we must say, that of all modes of the kind, we should desire no better way of seeing what ladies we admired most, and whom least, than by witnessing this trial of them at a linen-draper's counter.

A NEARER VIEW OF SOME OF THE SHOPS

In the general glance that we have taken at shops, we found ourselves unwillingly compelled to pass some of them too quickly. It is the object therefore of the present article to enter into those more attractive thresholds, and look a little about us. We imagine a fine day; time, about noon; scene, any good brilliant street. The ladies are abroad in white and green; the beaux lounging, conscious of their waists and neckcloths; the busy pushing onward, conscious of their bills; the dogs and coaches—but we must reserve this out-of-door view of the streets for a separate article.

To begin then, where our shopping experience began, with the toy-shop:

> Visions of glory, spare our aching sight!
> Ye just-breeched ages, crowd not on our soul!

We still seem to have a lively sense of the smell of that gorgeous red paint, which was on the handle of our first wooden sword! The pewter guard also—how beautifully fretted and like silver did it look! How did we hang it round our shoulder by the proud belt of an old ribbon;—then feel it well suspended; then draw it out of the sheath, eager to cut down four savage men for ill-using ditto of damsels! An old muff made an excellent grenadier's cap; or one's hat and feather, with the assistance of three surreptitious large pins, became fiercely modern and military. There it is, in that corner of the window, the same identical sword, to all appearance, which kept us awake the first night behind our pillow. We still feel ourselves little boys, while standing in this shop; and for that matter, so we do

on other occasions. A field has as much merit in our eyes, and gingerbread almost as much in our mouths, as at that daisy-plucking and cake-eating period of life. There is the trigger-rattling gun, fine of its kind, but not so complete a thing as the sword. Its memories are not so ancient: for Alexander or St. George did not fight with a musket. Neither is it so true a thing; it is not "like life." The trigger is too much like that of a crossbow; and the pea which it shoots, however hard, produces even to the imaginative faculties of boyhood a humiliating flash of the mock-heroic. It is difficult to fancy a dragon killed with a pea; but the shape and appurtenances of the sword being genuine, the whole sentiment of massacre is as much in its wooden blade, as if it were steel of Damascus. The drum is still more real, though not so heroic. In the corner opposite are battle-doors and shuttle-cocks, which have their maturer beauties; balls, which possess the additional zest of the danger of breaking people's windows; ropes, good for swinging and skipping, especially the long ones which others turn for you, while you run in a masterly manner up and down, or skip in one spot with an easy and endless exactitude of toe, looking alternately at their conscious faces; blood-allies, with which the possessor of a crisp finger and thumb-knuckle causes the smitten marbles to vanish out of the ring; kites, which must appear to more vital birds a ghastly kind of fowl, with their grim long white faces, no bodies, and endless tails;—cricket bats, manly to handle;—trap bats, a genteel inferiority;—swimming corks, despicable;—horses on wheels, an imposition on the infant public;—rocking-horses, too much like Pegasus, ardent, yet never getting on;—Dutch toys, so like life that they ought to be better;—Jacob's ladders, flapping down one over another their tintinnabulary shutters;—dissected maps, from which the infant statesmen may learn how to dovetail provinces and kingdoms;—paper posture-makers, who hitch up their knees against their shoulder-blades, and dangle their legs like an opera dancer;—Lilliputian plates, dishes, and other household utensils, in which a grand dinner is served up out of half an apple;—boxes of paints, to colour engravings with, always beyond the outline;—ditto of bricks, a very sensible and lasting toy, which we except from a grudge we have against the gravity of infant geometrics;—whips, very useful for cutting people's eyes unawares;—hoops, one of the most ancient as well as excellent of toys;—sheets of pictures, from A apple-pie up to farming, military, and zoological exhibitions, always taking

care that the Fly is as large as the Elephant, and the letter X exclusively appropriated to Xerxes;—musical deal-boxes, rather complaining than sweet, and more like a peal of bodkins than bells;—penny trumpets, awful at Bartlemy-tide;—jew's harps, that thrill and breathe between the lips like a metal tongue;—carts—carriages—hobby-horses, upon which the infant equestrian prances about proudly on his own feet;—in short, not to go through the whole representative body of existence —dolls, which are so dear to the maternal instincts of little girls. We protest, however, against that abuse of them, which makes them full-dressed young ladies in body, while they remain infant in face; especially when they are of frail wax. It is cultivating finery instead of affection. We prefer good honest plump limbs of cotton and sawdust, dressed in baby-linen, or even our ancient young friends, with their staring dotted eyes; red varnished faces, triangular noses, and Rosinante wooden limbs—not, it must be confessed, excessively shapely or feminine, but the reverse of fragile beauty, and prepared against all disasters.

The next step is to the pastry-cook's, where the plain bun is still the pleasantest thing in our eyes, from its respectability in those of childhood. The pastry, less patronised by judicious mothers, is only so much elegant indigestion: yet it is not easy to forget the pleasure of nibbling away the crust all round a raspberry or currant tart, in order to enjoy the three or four delicious semi-circular bites at the fruity plentitude remaining. There is a custard with a wall of paste round it, which provokes a siege of this kind; and the cheese-cake has its amenities of approach. The acid flavour is a relief to the mawkishness of the biffin or pressed baked apple, and an addition to the glib and quivering lightness of the jelly. Twelfth Cake, which when cut looks like the side of a rich pit of earth covered with snow, is pleasant from warmer associations. Confectionery does not seem in the same request as of old; its paint has hurt its reputation. Yet the school-boy has still much to say for its humbler suavities. Kisses are very amiable and allegorical. Eight or ten of them, judiciously wrapped up in pieces of letter-paper, have saved many a loving heart the trouble of a less eloquent billet-doux. Candied citron we look upon to be the very acmé and atticism of confectionery grace. Preserves are too much of a good thing, with the exception of the jams that retain their fruit-skins. "Jam satis." They qualify the cloying. Yet marmalade must not be passed over in these times,

when it has been raised to the dignity of the peerage. The other day there was a Duke of Marmalade in Hayti and a Count of Lemonade—so called, from places in which those eminent relishes are manufactured. After all, we must own that there is but one thing for which we care much at a pastry-cook's, except our old acquaintance the bun; especially as we can take up that, and go on. It is an ice. Fancy a very hot day; the blinds down, the loungers unusually languid; the pavement burning one's feet; the sun, with a strong outline in the street, baking one whole side of it like a brick-kiln; so that everybody is crowding on the other, except a man going to intercept a creditor bound for the Continent. Then think of a heaped-up ice, brought upon a salver with a spoon. What statesman, of any warmth of imagination, would not pardon the Neapolitans in summer, for an insurrection on account of the want of ice? Think of the first sidelong dip of the spoon in it, bringing away a well-sliced lump; then of the sweet wintry refreshment, that goes lengthening down one's throat; and lastly, of the sense of power and satisfaction resulting from having *had* the ice.

> Not Heaven itself can do away that slice;
> But what has been, has been; and I have had my ice.

We unaccountably omitted two excellent shops last week, —the fruiterer's and the sculptor's. There is great beauty as well as agreeableness in a well-disposed fruiterer's window. Here are the round piled-up oranges, deepening almost into red, and heavy with juice; the apple with its brown-red cheek, as if it had slept in the sun; the pear, swelling downwards; thronging grapes, like so many tight little bags of wine; the peach, whose handsome leathern coat strips off so finely; the pearly or ruby-like currants, heaped in light long baskets; the red little mouthful of strawberries; the larger purple ones of plums; cherries, whose old comparison with lips is better than anything new; mulberries, dark and rich with juice, fit to grow over what Homer calls the deep black-watered fountains; the swelling pomp of melons; the rough inexorable-looking cocoa-nut, milky at heart; the elaborate elegance of walnuts; the quaint cashoo-nut; almonds, figs, raisins, tamarinds, green leaves,—in short,

> Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields
> In India East or West, or middle shore
> In Pontus or the Punick coast, or where
> Alcinous reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat
> Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell.
>
> MILTON.

There is something of more refined service in waiting upon a lady in a fruit-shop, than in a pastry-cook's. The eating of tarts, as Sir Walter Scott handsomely saith in his *Life of Dryden* (who used to enjoy them, it seems, in company with "Madam Reeves"), is "no inelegant pleasure"; but there is something still more graceful and suitable in the choosing of the natural fruit, with its rosy lips and red cheeks. A white hand looks better on a basket of plums than in the doubtful touching of syrupy and sophisticated pastry. There is less of the kitchen about the fair visitor. She is more Pomona-like, native, and to the purpose. We help her, as we would a local deity.

Here be grapes whose lusty blood
Is the learned poet's good,
Sweeter yet did never crown
The head of Bacchus;—nuts more brown
Than the squirrels' teeth that crack them;
Deign, O fairest fair, to take them.
For these black-ey'd Driope
Hath often times commanded me,
With my clasped knee to climb;
See how well the lusty time
Hath deckt their rising cheeks in red,
Such as on your lips is spread.
Here be berries for a Queen,
Some be red, some be green;
These are of that luscious meat,
The great God Pan himself doth eat.
All these, and what the woods can yield,
The hanging mountain or the field,
I freely offer, and ere long
Will bring you more, more sweet and strong,
Till when humbly leave I take,
Lest the great Pan do awake,
That sleeping lies in a deep glade,
Under a broad beech's shade.

FLETCHER'S *Faithful Shepherdess.*

How the poets double every delight for us, with their imagination and their music!

In the windows of some of the sculptors' shops artificial fruit may be seen. It is a better thing to put upon a mantelpiece than many articles of greater fashion; but it gives an abominable sensation to one's imaginary teeth. The incautious epicure who plunges his teeth into "a painted snowball" in Italy (see Brydone's *Tour in Sicily and Malta*), can hardly receive so jarring a balk to his gums, as the bare apprehension of a bite at a stone peach; but the farther you go in a sculptor's shop the better. Many persons are not aware that there are show-rooms in these places, which are well worth getting a sight of by some small purchase. For the best plaster casts the Italian shops,

such as Papera's, in Marylebone Street, Golden Square, and Sarti's in Greek Street, are the best. Of all the shop-pleasures that are "not inelegant," an hour or two passed in a place of this kind is surely one of the most polite. Here are the gods and heroes of old, and the more beneficent philosophers, ancient and modern. You are looked upon, as you walk among them, by the paternal majesty of Jupiter, the force and decision of Minerva, the still more arresting gentleness of Venus, the budding compactness of Hebe, the breathing inspiration of Apollo. Here the Celestial Venus, naked in heart and body, ties up her locks, her drapery hanging upon her lower limbs. Here the Belvidere Apollo, breathing forth his triumphant disdain, follows with an earnest eye the shaft that has killed the serpent. Here the Graces, linked in an affectionate group, meet you in the naked sincerity of their innocence and generosity, their hands "open as day," and two advancing for one receding. Here Hercules, like the building of a man, looks down from his propping club, as if half-disdaining even that repose. There Mercury, with his light limbs, seems just to touch the ground, ready to give a start with his foot and be off again. Bacchus, with his riper cheek and his thicker hanging locks, appears to be eyeing one of his nymphs. The Vatican Apollo near him, leans upon the stump of a tree, the hand which hangs upon it holding a bit of his lyre, the other arm thrown up over his head, as if he felt the air upon his body, and heard it singing through the strings. In a corner on another side, is the Crouching Venus of John of Bologna, shrinking just before she steps into the bath. The Dancing Faun is not far off, with his animal spirits, and the Piping Faun, sedater because he possesses an art more accomplished. Among the other divinities, we look up with veneration to old Homer's head, resembling an earthly Jupiter. Plato beholds us with a bland dignity—a beauty unimpairable by years. How different from the brute impulse of Mars, the bloated self-will of Nero, or the dull and literal effeminacy of some of the other emperors! There is a sort of presence in sculpture more than in any other representations of art. It is curious to see how instinctively people will fall into this sentiment when they come into a place with busts and statues in it, however common. They hush, as if the images could hear them. In our boyhood, some of our most delightful holidays were spent in the gallery of the late Mr. West, in Newman Street. It runs a good way back from the street, crossing a small garden, and opening into loftier rooms on the other

side of it. We remember how the world used to seem shut out from us the moment the street door was closed, and we began stepping down those long-carpeted aisles of pictures, with statues in the angles where they turned. We had observed everybody walk down them in this way, like the mild possessor of the mansion, and we went so likewise. We have walked down with him at night to his painting-room, as he went in his white flannel gown, with a lamp in his hand, which shot a lustrous twilight upon the pictured walls in passing; and everything looked so quiet and graceful, that we should have thought it sacrilege to hear a sound beyond the light tread of his footsteps. But it was the statues that impressed us still more than the pictures. It seemed as if Venus and Apollo waited our turning at the corners; and there they were, always the same, placid and intuitive, more human and bodily than the paintings, yet too divine to be over real. It is to that house with the gallery in question, and the little green plot of ground, surrounded with an arcade and busts, that we owe the greatest part of our love for what is Italian and belongs to the fine arts. And if this is a piece of private history, with which the readers have little to do, they will excuse it for the sake of the greatest of all excuse, which is Love.

THE OLD GENTLEMAN

Our Old Gentleman, in order to be exclusively himself, must be either a widower or a bachelor. Suppose the former. We do not mention his precise age, which would be invidious:—nor whether he wears his own hair or a wig; which would be wanting in universality. If a wig, it is a compromise between the more modern scratch and the departed glory of the toupee. If his own hair, it is white, in spite of his favourite grandson, who used to get on the chair behind him, and pull the silver hairs out, ten years ago. If he is bald at top, the hairdresser, hovering and breathing about him like a second youth, takes care to give the bald place as much powder as the covered, in order that he may convey to the sensorium within a pleasing indistinctness of idea respecting the exact limits of skin and hair. He is very clean and neat; and, in warm weather, is proud of opening his waistcoat half-way down, and letting so much of his

frill be seen, in order to show his hardiness as well as taste. His watch and shirt-buttons are of the best; and he does not care if he has two rings on a finger. If his watch ever failed him at the club or coffee-house, he would take a walk every day to the nearest clock of good character, purely to keep it right. He has a cane at home, but seldom uses it, on finding it out of fashion with his elderly juniors. He has a small cocked hat for gala days, which he lifts higher from his head than the round one, when bowed to. In his pockets are two handkerchiefs (one for the neck at night-time), his spectacles, and his pocket-book. The pocket-book, among other things, contains a receipt for a cough, and some verses cut out of an odd sheet of an old magazine, on the lovely Duchess of A., beginning—

When beauteous Mira walks the plain.

He intends this for a commonplace book which he keeps, consisting of passages in verse and prose, cut out of newspapers and magazines, and pasted in columns; some of them rather gay. His principal other books are Shakespeare's *Plays* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*; the *Spectator*, the *History of England*, the Works of Lady M. W. Montague, Pope and Churchill; Middleton's *Geography*; the *Gentleman's Magazine*; Sir John Sinclair on Longevity; several plays with portraits in character; *Account of Elizabeth Canning*, *Memoirs of George Ann Bellamy*, *Poetical Amusements at Bath-Easton*, Blair's *Works*, *Elegant Extracts*; *Junius*, as originally published; a few pamphlets on the American War and Lord George Gordon, etc., and one on the French Revolution. In his sitting-rooms are some engravings from Hogarth and Sir Joshua; an engraved portrait of the Marquis of Granby; ditto of M. le Comte de Grasse surrendering to Admiral Rodney; a humorous piece after Penny; and a portrait of himself painted by Sir Joshua. His wife's portrait is in his chamber, looking upon his bed. She is a little girl, stepping forward with a smile, and a pointed toe, as if going to dance. He lost her when she was sixty.

The Old Gentleman is an early riser, because he intends to live at least twenty years longer. He continues to take tea for breakfast, in spite of what is said against its nervous effects; having been satisfied on that point some years ago by Dr. Johnston's criticism on Hanway, and a great liking for tea previously. His china cups and saucers have been broken since his wife's death, all but one, which is religiously kept for his use. He passes his morning in walking or riding, looking

in at auctions, looking after his India bonds or some such money securities, furthering some subscription set on foot by his excellent friend Sir John, or cheapening a new old print for his portfolio. He also hears of the newspapers; not caring to see them till after dinner at the coffee-house. He may also cheapen a fish or so; the fishmonger soliciting his doubting eye as he passes, with a profound bow of recognition. He eats a pear before dinner.

His dinner at the coffee-house is served up to him at the accustomed hour, in the old accustomed way, and by the accustomed waiter. If William did not bring it, the fish would be sure to be stale, and the flesh new. He eats no tart; or if he ventures on a little, takes cheese with it. You might as soon attempt to persuade him out of his senses, as that cheese is not good for digestion. He takes port; and if he has drunk more than usual, and in a more private place, may be induced by some respectful inquiries respecting the old style of music, to sing a song composed by Mr. Oswald or Mr. Lampe, such as—

Chloe, by that borrowed kiss,

or

Come, gentle god of soft repose,

or his wife's favourite ballad, beginning—

At Upton on the hill,
There lived a happy pair.

Of course, no such exploit can take place in the coffee-room: but he will canvass the theory of that matter there with you, or discuss the weather, or the markets, or the theatres, or the merits of "my Lord North" or "my Lord Rockingham"; for he rarely says simply, lord; it is generally "my lord," trippingly and genteelly off the tongue. If alone after dinner, his great delight is the newspaper; which he prepares to read by wiping his spectacles, carefully adjusting them on his eyes, and drawing the candle close to him, so as to stand sideways betwixt his ocular aim and the small type. He then holds the paper at arm's length, and dropping his eyelids half down and his mouth half open, takes cognisance of the day's information. If he leaves off, it is only when the door is opened by a new-comer, or when he suspects somebody is over-anxious to get the paper out of his hand. On these occasions he gives an important hem! or so; and resumes.

In the evening, our Old Gentleman is fond of going to the theatre, or of having a game of cards. If he enjoys the latter

at his own house or lodgings, he likes to play with some friends whom he has known for many years; but an elderly stranger may be introduced, if quiet and scientific; and the privilege is extended to younger men of letters; who, if ill players, are good losers. Not that he is a miser, but to win money at cards is like proving his victory by getting the baggage; and to win off a younger man is a substitute for his not being able to beat him at rackets. He breaks up early, whether at home or abroad.

At the theatre, he likes a front row in the pit. He comes early, if he can do so without getting into a squeeze, and sits patiently waiting for the drawing up of the curtain, with his hands placidly lying one over the other on the top of his stick. He generously admires some of the best performers, but thinks them far inferior to Garrick, Woodward, and Clive. During splendid scenes, he is anxious that the little boy should see.

He has been induced to look in at Vauxhall again, but likes it still less than he did years back, and cannot bear it in comparison with Ranelagh. He thinks everything looks poor, flaring, and jaded. "Ah!" says he, with a sort of triumphant sigh, "Ranelagh was a noble place! Such taste, such elegance, such beauty! There was the Duchess of A., the finest woman in England, Sir; and Mrs. L., a mighty fine creature; and Lady Susan what's her name, that had that unfortunate affair with Sir Charles. Sir, they came swimming by you like the swans."

The Old Gentleman is very particular in having his slippers ready for him at the fire, when he comes home. He is also extremely choice in his snuff, and delights to get a fresh box-full in Tavistock Street, on his way to the theatre. His box is a curiosity from India. He calls favourite young ladies by their Christian names, however slightly acquainted with them; and has a privilege of saluting all brides, mothers, and indeed every species of lady, on the least holiday occasion. If the husband, for instance, has met with a piece of luck, he instantly moves forward, and gravely kisses the wife on the cheek. The wife then says, "My niece, Sir, from the country"; and he kisses the niece. The niece, seeing her cousin biting her lips at the joke, says, "My cousin Harriet, Sir"; and he kisses the cousin. He "never recollects such weather," except during the "Great Frost," or when he rode down with "Jack Skrimshire to Newmarket." He grows young again in his little grandchildren, especially the one which he thinks most like himself; which is the handsomest. Yet he likes best perhaps the one most resembling his wife; and will sit with him on his lap, holding his

hand in silence, for a quarter of an hour together. He plays most tricks with the former, and makes him sneeze.' He asks little boys in general who was the father of Zebedee's children. If his grandsons are at school, he often goes to see them; and makes them blush by telling the master or the upper-scholars, that they are fine boys, and of a precocious genius. He is much struck when an old acquaintance dies, but adds that he lived too fast; and that poor Bob was a sad dog in his youth; "a very sad dog, Sir; mightily set upon a short life and a merry one."

When he gets very old indeed, he will sit for whole evenings, and say little or nothing; but informs you that there is Mrs. Jones (the housekeeper)—"*She*'ll talk."

THE OLD LADY

If the Old Lady is a widow and lives alone, the manners of her condition and time of life are so much the more apparent. She generally dresses in plain silks, that make a gentle rustling as she moves about the silence of her room; and she wears a nice cap with a lace border, that comes under the chin. In a placket at her side is an old enamelled watch, unless it is locked up in a drawer of her toilet, for fear of accidents. Her waist is rather tight and trim than otherwise, as she had a fine one when young; and she is not sorry if you see a pair of her stockings on a table, that you may be aware of the neatness of her leg and foot. Contented with these and other evident indications of a good shape, and letting her young friends understand that she can afford to obscure it a little, she wears pockets, and uses them well too. In the one is her handkerchief, and any heavier matter that is not likely to come out with it, such as the change of a sixpence; in the other is a miscellaneous assortment, consisting of a pocket-book, a bunch of keys, a needle-case, crumbs of biscuit, a nutmeg and grater, a smelling-bottle, and, according to the season, an orange or apple, which after many days she draws out, warm and glossy, to give to some little child that has well behaved itself. She generally occupies two rooms, in the neatest condition possible. In the chamber is a bed with a white coverlet, built up high and round, to look well, and with curtains of a pastoral pattern, consisting alternately of large plants, and shepherds and shepherdesses. On the mantelpiece

are more shepherds and shepherdesses, with dot-eyed sheep at their feet, all in coloured ware: the man, perhaps, in a pink jacket and knots of ribbons at his knees and shoes, holding his crook lightly in one hand, and with the other at his breast, turning his toes out and looking tenderly at the shepherdess: the woman holding a crook also, and modestly returning his look, with a gipsy-hat jerked up behind, a very slender waist, with petticoat and hips to counteract, and the petticoat pulled up through the pocket-holes, in order to show the trimness of her ankles. But these patterns, of course, are various. The toilet is ancient, carved at the edges, and tied about with a snow-white drapery of muslin. Beside it are various boxes, mostly japan; and the set of drawers are exquisite things for a little girl to rummage, if ever little girl be so bold,—containing ribbons and laces of various kinds; linen smelling of lavender, of the flowers of which there is always dust in the corners; a heap of pocket-books for a series of years; and pieces of dress long gone by, such as head-fronts, stomachers, and flowered satin shoes, with enormous heels. The stock of letters are under especial lock and key. So much for the bed-room. In the sitting-room is rather a spare assortment of shining old mahogany furniture, or carved arm-chairs equally old, with chintz draperies down to the ground; a folding or other screen, with Chinese figures, their round, little-eyed, meek faces perking sideways; a stuffed bird, perhaps in a glass case (a living one is too much for her); a portrait of her husband over the mantel-piece, in a coat with frog-buttons, and a delicate frilled hand lightly inserted in the waistcoat; and opposite him on the wall, is a piece of embroidered literature, framed and glazed, containing some moral distich or maxim, worked in angular capital letters, with two trees or parrots below, in their proper colours; the whole concluding with an ABC and numerals, and the name of the fair industrious, expressing it to be "her work, Jan. 14, 1762." The rest of the furniture consists of a looking-glass with carved edges, perhaps a settee, a hassock for the feet, a mat for the little dog, and a small set of shelves, in which are the *Spectator* and *Guardian*, the *Turkish Spy*, a Bible and Prayer Book, Young's *Night Thoughts* with a piece of lace in it to flatten, Mrs. Rowe's *Devout Exercises of the Heart*, Mrs. Glasse's *Cookery*, and perhaps *Sir Charles Grandison*, and *Clarissa*. *John Buncle* is in the closet among the pickles and preserves. The clock is on the landing-place between the two room doors, where it ticks audibly but quietly; and the landing-place, as well as

the stairs, is carpeted to a nicety. The house is most in character, and properly coeval, if it is in a retired suburb, and strongly built, with wainscot rather than paper inside, and lockers in the windows. Before the windows should be some quivering poplars. Here the Old Lady receives a few quiet visitors to tea, and perhaps an early game at cards: or you may see her going out on the same kind of visit herself, with a light umbrella running up into a stick and crooked ivory handle, and her little dog, equally famous for his love to her and captious antipathy to strangers. Her grandchildren dislike him on holidays, and the boldest sometimes ventures to give him a sly kick under the table. When she returns at night, she appears, if the weather happens to be doubtful, in a calash; and her servant in pattens, follows half behind and half at her side, with a lantern.

Her opinions are not many nor new. She thinks the clergyman a nice man. The Duke of Wellington, in her opinion, is a very great man; but she has a secret preference for the Marquis of Granby. She thinks the young women of the present day too forward, and the men not respectful enough; but hopes her grand-children will be better; though she differs with her daughter in several points respecting their management. She sets little value on the new accomplishments; is a great though delicate connoisseur in butcher's meat and all sorts of housewifery; and if you mention waltzes, expatiates on the grace and fine breeding of the minuet. She longs to have seen one danced by Sir Charles Grandison, whom she almost considers as a real person. She likes a walk of a summer's evening, but avoids the new streets, canals, etc., and sometimes goes through the churchyard, where her children and husband lie buried, serious, but not melancholy. She has had three great epochs in her life: her marriage—her having been at court, to see the King and Queen and Royal Family—and a compliment on her figure she once received, in passing, from Mr. Wilkes, whom she describes as a sad, loose man, but engaging. His plainness she thinks much exaggerated. If anything takes her at a distance from home, it is still the court; but she seldom stirs, even for that. The last time but one that she went, was to see the Duke of Wirtemberg; and most probably for the last time of all, to see the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold. From this beatific vision she returned with the same admiration as ever for the fine comely appearance of the Duke of York and the rest of the family, and great delight at having had a near

view of the Princess, whom she speaks of with smiling pomp and lifted mittens, clasping them as passionately as she can together, and calling her, in a transport of mixed loyalty and self-love, a fine royal young creature, and "Daughter of England."

COFFEE-HOUSES AND SMOKING

SMOKING has had its vicissitudes, as well as other fashions. In Elizabeth's day, when it first came up, it was a high accomplishment: James (who liked it none the better for its being of Raleigh's invention) indignantly refused it the light of his countenance: in Charles's time it was dashed out by the cannon; lips had no leisure for it under Charles the Second: the clubs and the Dutch brought it back again with King William: it prevailed more or less during the reign of the first two Georges; grew thin, and died away under George the Third; and has lately reappeared, with a flourish of Turkish pipes, and through the milder medium of the cigar, under the auspices of his successor.

The last smoker I recollect among those of the old school, was a clergyman. He had seen the best society, and was a man of the most polished behaviour. This did not hinder him from taking his pipe every evening before he went to bed. He sat in his arm-chair, his back gently bending, his knees a little apart, his eyes placidly inclined towards the fire: and delighted, in the intervals of puff, to recount anecdotes of the Marquis of Rockingham and "my Lord North." The end of his recreation was announced to those who had gone to bed, by the tapping of the bowl of his pipe upon the hob, for the purpose of emptying it of its ashes. Ashes to ashes; head to bed. It is a pity that the long day of life cannot always terminate as pleasantly. Bacon said that the art of making deathbeds easy was among the *desiderata* of knowledge. Perhaps, for the most part, they are easier than the great chancellor imagined; but, no doubt, the most conscientious ones might often be bettered. A virtuous man shall not always take his departure as comfortably as a sinner with a livelier state of diaphragm. Frenchmen have died, sitting in their chairs, full-dressed and powdered. I have a better taste in mortality than that; but I think I could

drop off with a decent compromise between thought and forgetfulness, sitting with my pipe by a fireside, in an old elbow-chair.

I delight to think of the times when smoking was an ornament of literature, a refreshment and repose to the studious head; when Hobbes meditated, and Cowley built his castles in those warmer clouds, and Dr. Aldrich his quadrangles. In smoking, you may think or not think, as you please. If the mind is actively employed, the pipe keeps it in a state of satisfaction, supplies it with a side luxury, a soft ground to work upon. If you wish to be idle, the successive puffs take the place of thinking. There is a negative activity in it, that fills up the place of real. Intruding notions are met with a puff in their teeth, and puffed into nothing. Studious men are subject to a working and fermenting of thought, when their meditations would fain be over: they cannot always cease meditating. Bacon was accustomed to take a draught of March beer towards bedtime, to settle this æstuary of his mind. I wonder he did not take a pipe, as a gentler carrier off of that uneasiness. Being a link between thought and no thought, one would imagine it would have been a more advisable compromise with his state of excitement than the dashing of one stream upon another in that violent manner, and forcing his nerves to behave themselves. There are delicate heads, I am aware, that cannot bear even a cigar. Smoking, of any sort, makes too sudden an appeal to the connection between their sensitive nerves and the stomach; produces what the doctors call predigestion, and is rebuked with a punishment of the weaker part, to wit, the brain. Bacon's might have been such in his old age, after all the service it had seen; but I wonder, on that account, that he resorted to the jolly and fox-hunting succedaneum of beer. A walk would have been better. "After study walk a mile." The object is to restore the blood gradually to motion, arrested as it has been with many thoughts, and confused when they let it go. Now a pipe is a more gradual restorative than a draught. As it is a shadowing off between thinking and no thinking, so it is a preparer for sleep, and a reconciler with want of company.

But the genius of smoking, being truly philosophical, has its love of society too: and then it resorts to a cup. Among Mr. Stothard's agreeable designs for the *Spectator*, there is one of the club over a table, with their pipes and their wine. Captain Sentry is going to light his pipe at the candle; Sir Roger is sitting with his knees apart, like the old gentleman I have been describing, in the act of preparing his,—perhaps

thinking what a pretty tobacco-stopper the widow's finger would have made. One longs to be among them. As I never pass Covent Garden (and I pass it very often) without thinking of all the old coffee-houses and the wits, so I can never reflect, without impatience, that there are no such meetings nowadays, and no coffee-room that looks as if it would suit them. People confine themselves too much to their pews and boxes. In former times there was a more humane openness of intercourse. Different parties had indeed their respective places of resort; a natural consequence of politics, perhaps of letters; but this prevented ungraceful quarrels. Hostility might get in, but was obliged to behave itself. Dryden, who was the object of attack to an increasing horde of scribblers, was never insulted in his coffee-house. Even the bravoes of Lord Rochester, or whoever it was that had him waylaid in Rose Alley, did not venture to disturb the peace of his symposium. The room in which he sat is described as open to all comers, and he occupied a prominent part in it. In winter a place was sacred for him at the fireside.

I confess, if I were a wit, I would rather have a room to myself and friends. I should like to be public only in my books. But this is a taste originating in the times. Dryden was a modest man in his intercourse; and was never charged, I believe, among all the accusations of vanity brought against him, of being the vainer for frequenting a coffee-room. Being a lover of wits, I should like to see the times alter in this respect, and the great men of all parties become visible. But where could they be so? Where could the pleasant fellows among our existing Whigs and Tories take up one of their respective tabernacles, and make a religion of our going to hear them, and aspiring to a pinch out of their snuff-boxes? I was thinking of this, as I passed through Convent Garden the other evening. Above all, said I, where could we have the whole warmth of the intercourse revived, the *Spectator's* tobacco-pipe and all, especially when it is no longer the fashion to drink wine? It would take a great deal to fetch Englishmen again out of their boxes. They do not allow smoking in the best coffee-houses; and where they do, so many other things are allowed, that no gentleman would remain. Where shall I place my imaginary coterie, and fancy myself listening to the Drydens and Addisons of the day? It is the fashion now for your wilder writers in magazines to patronise, or pretend to patronise, some house of call, or vociferation, the mediocrity of which shall give them an air of

vigour and defiance in the patronage, and prove them men of originality. There is something pleasant in this where it is not an affectation of superiority to prejudice, arising out of an absolute sense to the contrary, and betraying itself by a tone of bullying. But real or not, and with all my regard for those honest houses, where the only sophisticate thing is the presence of some of their panegyrists, they will not do for the purpose before us. Due is my consideration for the "Dog and the Coal-hole"; pungent my sense of the "Cheshire Cheese"; the "Hole in the Wall" has a snug appellation; and as for Dolly's "Beef-Steak House," great would be my ingratitude, did I forget its hot pewter-plate, new bread, floury potatoes, foaming pot of porter, and perfect beef-steak. The man that cannot enjoy a beef-steak there, can enjoy a stomach nowhere. But it is not what I was seeking the other night. Neither is the "Hummums," nor the "Bedford," nor the "Piazza," nor the "Southampton," nor the "Salopian."

During these meditations, I approach my friend Gliddon's snuff and tobacco shop, in King Street. Ay, here, said I, is wherewithal to fill the boxes of the Steeles and Congreves, and the pipes of the Aldriches and Sir Roger de Coverleys. But where is the room in which we can fancy them? Where is the coffee-house to match? Where the union of a certain domestic comfort with publicity,—journals of literature as well as news, —a fire visible to all, — cups without inebriety,—smoking without vulgarity? On a sudden, I find carriages stopping at the door; I recognise an acquaintance of mine, a member of Parliament, who does not easily come out of his way to fill a snuff-box: I hear a gentleman inquiring about the coffee-room, and "whether Prince Esterhazy is to be turned away again by a stress of company." I enter, and ask my old acquaintance what miracle he has been about. He points to a board in his shop, and then takes me through a door in the wall into the very room that I was looking for. It was rather two rooms thrown into one, and with a fire in each; a divan of ample dimensions runs round it; lamps of ground glass diffuse a soft, yet sufficing light; the floor is carpeted; two cheerful fires offer double facility of approach, a twofold provocation to poke and be self-possessed; around are small mahogany tables, with chairs, in addition to the divan; and in the midst of all, stands a large one, profusely covered with the periodical works of the day, newspapers, magazines, and publications that come out in numbers. I sit down, and am initiated with the hospitality due to an old friend,

in all the amenities of the place. A cigar and an excellent cup of coffee are served. "But will you have as good coffee at the end of the year?"—"Can you ask me that question, Mr. Honeycomb—you, who have known me long?"—"Well, if anybody that ever kept a shop can do it, it is you: and I tell you what; —if you do, depend upon it, no success will be like yours. Good fortune produces abuse of it; but the abuse is always as impolitic, compared with a genuine policy, as cunning is inferior to wisdom. If there were any one shop in London, in which the customer for a series of years were sure to find one undeviating goodness of article, the phenomenon would attract and retain all eyes. And these cigars: the boy tells me they are excellent also. Is this true?"—"I can tell you one thing they say of them, by which you may judge for yourself; they say they are smuggled." —"Oh, ho!

"And snatch a grace beyond the reach of law."

"You know how the law picked my pocket once. Before that time, I was so tender of conscience, that when I was at Hastings I would not purchase a toy or a pair of gloves that was contraband; whereas *now*—I will not ask you to make me certain whether the articles are smuggled or not—say no more—rest your insinuating fame on that. But a prettier-tasted cigar —a leaf with a finer tip of flavour in it,—pray, how many cigars might a man smoke of an evening? I have a great mind to try. But I must look at your publications. By the way, you have no pipes, I see; and I observe no bottles. Have you neither pipes nor wine?"—"No, we are exclusively cigar; we have coffee, sherbet, lemonade—all reasonable Oriental drinks to harmonise with our divan, but nothing to disturb the peace of it. Thus we secure a certain domestic elegance indoors, and can prevent drunkards from coming in to get drunker. A gentleman may come from his dining- or drawing-room, and still find himself in a manner at home. Besides, a cigar is the mildest as well as most fashionable form of tobacco-taking; and as it is no longer the mode to drink wine, wine is not sought after."—"That is all very good for you; but for me, who have been casting a wistful eye, as I came along, at the old haunts of Sir Roger and his friends, I confess it is a drawback on a certain fancy I had, when I first came in. However, we must consider what Steele and Addison would have liked had they lived now, and witnessed the effect of the *Spectators* of other men. It is they that have helped to ruin their own pipes and

wine, and given us a greater taste for literature and domesticity; and I comfort myself with concluding that they would have come here, at least *after* their bottle, to take their coffee and look over your papers and magazines. There he sits, over the way,—Steele, I mean,—the man with the short face; for I perceive there is wit at that table. Opposite him is Addison, in black, looking something like a master in chancery. The handsome man, always on the giggle, must be Rowe; and the other one, an officer, is Colonel Brett. But who is this tall formal personage coming up? Look at him,—the very man, Ambrose Phillips. Who would think that his muse was a little dancer in octosyllables,—a dandler of young ladies of quality?"

Mine host left me alone to complete my initiation. Another cup of coffee was brought me, and five several publications; to wit, a newspaper, a twopenny sheet, a number to be continued, a magazine, and a review; for I am fond of having too many books at once. I looked over these, and then, contented with the power to read them further, continued giving bland puffs to my cigar, and speculating around me. The conversations were maintained in very quiet and gentlemanly tones: now and then was heard the sound of a leaf turning over; sometimes a hem, consequential or otherwise; my own puffs were always distinguishable to myself; and at intervals I could discern those of others, and hear the social crackling of the fire. No noisy altercation here; no sanded floors or cold feet; no impatient waiting for the newspaper, while the person in possession keeps it the longer because you wait: all is warm, easy, quiet, abundant, satisfactory.

I conclude the principal visitors of the divan to be theatre-goers, officers who have learnt to love a cigar on service, men of letters, and men of fortune who have a taste for letters, and can whirl themselves from their own firesides to these. If you are in the City, on business, go for a steak to Dolly's; if midway between City and West End, go to the first clean-looking larder you come to; if a man of fashion, and you must dine in your altitudes, go to the "Clarendon"; but after any of these, man of fashion or not, go if you can, and get your cigar and your cup of coffee at Gliddon's. It is finishing with a grace and a repose.

By the way, I spent a pretty afternoon the other day. It was a complete thing, one thing excepted: but—she's at Paris. I dined, I will not say how early; but took only a couple of glasses of wine, which will retrieve my character on that point. I then made tour of the book-stalls, at Covent-Garden; bought some

comedies and a Catullus; went to the theatre, and saw *Der Freyschütz* and *Charles the Second*; re-issued from among the perukes, with a gallant sense about my head and shoulders, as if I carried one myself; went and settled my faculties over a cup of the *New Monthly* at Gliddon's; got home by eleven (for I would not go to a party where she was not); and fell to sleep at the words "Lulling hope," in a song I am writing.

ON WASHERWOMEN

WRITERS, we think, might oftener indulge themselves in direct picture-making, that is to say, in detached sketches of men and things, which should be to *manners*, what those of Theophrastus are to *character*.

Painters do not always think it necessary to paint epics, or to fill a room with a series of pictures on one subject. They deal sometimes in single figures and groups; and often exhibit a profounder feeling in these little concentrations of their art, than in subjects of a more numerous description. Their *gusto*, perhaps, is less likely to be lost, on that very account. They are no longer Sultans in a seraglio, but lovers with a favourite mistress, retired and absorbed. A Madonna of Correggio's, the Bath of Michael Angelo, the Standard of Leonardo da Vinci, Titian's Mistress, and other single subjects or groups of the great masters, are acknowledged to be among their greatest performances, some of them their greatest of all.

It is the same with music. Overtures, which are supposed to make allusion to the whole progress of the story they precede, are not always the best productions of the master; still less are choruses, and quintetts, and other pieces involving a multiplicity of actors. The overture to Mozart's *Magic Flute* (*Zauberflöte*) is worthy of the title of the piece; it is truly enchanting; but what are so intense, in their way, as the duet of the two lovers, *Ah perdona*,—or the laughing trio in *Così Fan Tutte*,—or that passionate serenade in *Don Giovanni*, *Deh vieni alla finestra*, which breathes the very soul of refined sensuality! . The gallant is before you, with his mandolin and his cap and feather, taking place of the nightingale for that amorous hour; and you feel that the sounds must inevitably

draw his mistress to the window. Their intenseness even renders them pathetic; and his heart seems in earnest, because his senses are.

We do not mean to say, that, in proportion as the work is large and the subject numerous, the merit may not be the greater if all is good. Raphael's Sacrament is a greater work than his Adam and Eve; but his Transfiguration would still have been the finest picture in the world, had the second group in the foreground been away; nay, the latter is supposed, and, we think, with justice, to injure its effect. We only say that there are times when the numerousness may scatter the individual gusto;—that the greatest possible feeling may be proved without it;—and, above all, returning to our more immediate subject, that writers, like painters, may sometimes have leisure for excellent detached pieces, when they want it for larger productions. Here, then, is an opportunity for them. Let them, in their intervals of history, or, if they want time for it, give us portraits of humanity. People lament that Sappho did not write more: but, at any rate, her two odes are worth twenty epics like Tryphiodorus.

But, in portraits of this kind, writing will also have a great advantage; and may avoid what seems to be an inevitable stumbling-block in paintings of a similar description. Between the matter-of-fact works of the Dutch artists, and the subtle compositions of Hogarth, there seems to be a medium reserved only for the pen. The writer only can tell you all he means, —can let you into his whole mind and intention. The moral insinuations of the painter are, on the one hand, apt to be lost for want of distinctness; or tempted, on the other, by their visible nature, to put on too gross a shape. If he leaves his meanings to be imagined, he may unfortunately speak to unimaginative spectators, and generally does; if he wishes to explain himself so as not to be mistaken, he will paint a set of comments upon his own incidents and characters, rather than let them tell for themselves. Hogarth himself, for instance, who never does anything without a sentiment or a moral, is too apt to perk them both in your face, and to be over-redundant in his combinations. His persons, in many instances, seem too much taken away from their proper indifference to effect, and to be made too much of conscious agents and joint contributors. He "o'er-informs his tenements." His very goods and chattels are didactic. He makes a capital remark of a cow's horn, and brings up a piece of cannon in aid of a satire on

vanity.[1] It is the writer only who, without hurting the most delicate propriety of the representation, can leave no doubt of all his intentions,—who can insinuate his object, in two or three words, to the dullest conception; and, in conversing with the most foreign minds, take away all the awkwardness of interpretation. What painting gains in universality to the eye, it loses by an infinite proportion in power of suggestion to the understanding.

There is something of the sort of sketches we are recommending in Sterne: but Sterne had a general connected object before him, of which the parts apparently detached were still connecting links: and while he also is apt to overdo his subject like Hogarth, is infinitely less various and powerful. The greatest master of detached portrait is Steele: but his pictures too form a sort of link in a chain. Perhaps the completest specimen of what we mean in the English language is Shenstone's *School-Mistress*, by far his best production, and a most natural, quiet, and touching old dame.—But what? Are we leaving out *Chaucer*? Alas, we thought to be doing something a little original, and find it all existing already, and in unrivalled perfection, in his portraits of the Canterbury Pilgrims! We can only dilate, and vary upon his principle.

But we are making a very important preface to what may turn out a very trifling subject, and must request the reader not to be startled at the homely specimen we are about to give him, after all this gravity of recommendation. Not that we would apologise for homeliness, as homeliness. The beauty of this unlimited power of suggestion in writing is, that you may take up the driest and most commonplace of all possible subjects, and strike a light out of it to warm your intellect and your heart by. The fastidious habits of polished life generally incline us to reject, as incapable of interesting us, whatever does not present itself in a graceful shape of its own, and a ready-made suit of ornaments. But some of the plainest weeds become beautiful under the microscope. It is the benevolent provision of Nature, that in proportion as you feel the necessity of extracting interest from common things, you are enabled to do so;—and the very least that this familiarity with homeliness will do for us is to render our artificial delicacy less liable to annoyance, and to teach us how to grasp the nettles till they obey us.

[1] See the cannon going off in the turbulent portrait of a General Officer, and the cow's head coming just over that of the citizen who is walking with his wife.

The reader sees that we are Wordsworthians enough not to confine our tastes to the received elegancies of society; and, in one respect, we go farther than Mr. Wordsworth, for, though as fond, perhaps, of the country as he, we can manage to please ourselves in the very thick of cities, and even find there as much reason to do justice to Providence, as he does in the haunts of sportsmen, and anglers, and all-devouring insects.

To think, for instance, of that laborious and inelegant class of the community—*Washerwomen*, and of all the hot, disagreeable dabbling, smoking, splashing, kitcheny, cold-dining, anti-company-receiving associations, to which they give rise. What can be more annoying to any tasteful lady or gentleman, at their first waking in the morning, than when that dreadful thump at the door comes, announcing the tub-tumbling viragoes, with their brawny arms and brawling voices? We must confess, for our own parts, that our taste, in the abstract, is not for washerwomen; we prefer Dryads and Naiads, and the figures that resemble them:

> Fair forms, that glance amid the green of woods,
> Or from the waters give their sidelong shapes
> Half swelling.

Yet we have lain awake sometimes in a street in town, after this first confounded rap, and pleased ourselves with imagining how equally the pains and enjoyments of this world are dealt out, and what a pleasure there is in the mere contemplation of any set of one's fellow-creatures and their humours, when our knowledge has acquired humility enough to look at them steadily.

The reader knows the knock which we mean. It comes like a lump of lead and instantly wakes the maid, whose business it is to get up, though she pretends not to hear it. Another knock is inevitable, and it comes, and then another; but still Betty does not stir, or stirs only to put herself in a still snugger posture, knowing very well that they must knock again. "Now, 'drat that Betty," says one of the washerwomen; "she hears as well as we do, but the deuce a bit will she move till we give her another"; and at the word another, down goes the knocker again. "It's very odd," says the master of the house, mumbling from under the bed-clothes, "that Betty does not get up to let the people in; I've heard that knocker three times." "Oh," returns the mistress, "she's as lazy as she's high,"—and off goes the chamber-bell;—by which time Molly, who begins to lose her sympathy with her fellow-servant in impatience of what is

going on, gives her one or two conclusive digs in the side; when the other gets up, and rubbing her eyes, and mumbling, and hastening and shrugging herself downstairs, opens the door with—"Lard, Mrs. Watson, I hope you haven't been standing here long?"—"Standing here long, Mrs. Betty! Oh, don't tell me; people might stand starving their legs off, before you'd put a finger out of bed."—"Oh, don't say so, Mrs. Watson; I'm sure I always rises at the first knock; and there—you'll find everything comfortable below, with a nice hock of ham, which I made John leave for you." At this the washerwomen leave their grumbling, and shuffle downstairs, hoping to see Mrs. Betty early at breakfast. Here, after warming themselves at the copper, taking a mutual pinch of snuff, and getting things ready for the wash, they take a snack at the promised hock; for people of this profession have always their appetite at hand, and every interval of labour is invariably cheered by the prospect of *having something* at the end it. "Well," says Mrs. Watson, finishing the last cut, "some people thinks themselves mighty generous for leaving one what little they can't eat; but, howsomever, it's better than nothing." "Ah," says Mrs. Jones, who is a minor genius, "one must take what one can get now-a-days; but Squire Hervey's for my money." "Squire Hervey!" rejoins Mrs. Watson, "what's that, the great what's-his-name as lives yonder?" "Ay," returns Mrs. Jones, "him as has a niece and nevvy, as they say eats him out of house and land"; and here commences the history of all the last week of the whole neighbourhood round, which continues amidst the dipping of splashing fists, the rumbling of suds, and the creaking of wringings-out, till an hour or two are elapsed; and then for another snack and a pinch of snuff, till the resumption of another hour's labour or so brings round the time for first breakfast. Then, having had nothing to signify since five, they sit down at half-past six in the wash-house, to take their own meal before the servants meet at the general one. This is the chief moment of enjoyment. They have just laboured enough to make the tea and bread and butter welcome, are at an interesting point of the conversation, (for there they contrive to leave off on purpose), and so down they sit, fatigued and happy, with their red elbows and white corrugated fingers, to a tub turned upside down, and a dish of good Christian souchong, fit for a body to drink.

We could dwell a good deal upon this point of time, but shall only admonish the fastidious reader, who thinks he has all the taste and means of enjoyment to himself, how he looks with

scorn upon two persons, who are perhaps at this moment the happiest couple of human beings in the street,—who have discharged their duty, have earned their enjoyment, and have health and spirits to relish it to the full. A washerwoman's cup of tea may vie with the first drawn cork at a bon-vivant's table, and the complacent opening of her snuff-box with that of the most triumphant politician over a scheme of partition. We say nothing of the continuation of their labours, of the scandal they resume, or the complaints they pour forth, when they first set off again in the indolence of a satisfied appetite, at the quantity of work which the mistress of the house, above all other mistresses, is sure to heap upon them. Scandal and complaint, in these instances, do not hurt the complacency of our reflections; they are in their proper sphere; and are nothing but a part, as it were, of the day's work, and are so much vent to the animal spirits. Even the unpleasant day which the work causes upstairs in some houses,—the visitors which it excludes, and the leg of mutton which it hinders from roasting, are only so much enjoyment kept back and contrasted, in order to be made keener the rest of the week. Beauty itself is indebted to it, and draws from that steaming outhouse and splashing tub the well-fitting robe that gives out its figure, and the snowy cap that contrasts its curls and its complexion. In short, whenever we hear a washerwoman at her foaming work, or see her plodding towards us with her jolly warm face, her mob cap, her black stockings, clattering pattens, and tub at arm's length resting on her hip-joint, we look upon her as a living lesson to us to make the most both of time and comfort, and as a sort of allegorical compound of pain and pleasure, a little too much, perhaps, in the style of Rubens.

THE MAID-SERVANT [1]

Must be considered as young, or else she has married the butcher, the butler, or her cousin, or has otherwise settled into a character distinct from her original one, so as to become what is properly called the domestic. The Maid-servant, in her apparel, is either slovenly and fine by turns, and dirty

[1] In some respects, particularly of costume, this portrait must be understood of originals existing twenty or thirty years ago. [Author's note of 1816.]

always; or she is at all times neat and tight, and dressed according to her station. In the latter case, her ordinary dress is black stockings, a stuff gown, a cap, and a neck-handkerchief pinned cornerwise behind. If you want a pin, she feels about her, and has always one to give you. On Sundays and holidays, and perhaps of afternoons, she changes her black stockings for white, puts on a gown of a better texture and fine pattern, sets her cap and her curls jauntily, and lays aside the neck-handkerchief for a high-body, which, by the way, is not half so pretty.

The general furniture of her ordinary room, the kitchen, is not so much her own as her master's and mistress's, and need not be described: but in a drawer of the dresser or the table, in company with a duster and a pair of snuffers, may be found some of her property, such as a brass thimble, a pair of scissors, a thread-case, a piece of wax candle much wrinkled with the thread, an odd volume of *Pamela*, and perhaps a sixpenny play, such as *George Barnwell* or Southerne's *Oroonoko*. There is a piece of looking-glass in the window. The rest of her furniture is in the garret, where you may find a good looking-glass on the table; and in the window a Bible, a comb and a piece of soap. Here stands also, under stout lock and key, the mighty mystery, —the box,—containing, among other things, her clothes, two or three song-books, consisting of nineteen for the penny; sundry tragedies at a halfpenny the sheet; the *Whole Nature of Dreams Laid Open*, together with the *Fortune-teller* and the *Account of the Ghost of Mrs. Veal*; the *Story of the Beautiful Zoa* "who was cast away on a desert island, showing how," etc.; some half-crowns in a purse, including pieces of country-money; a silver penny wrapped up in cotton by itself; a crooked sixpence, given her before she came to town, and the giver of which has either forgotten or been forgotten by her, she is not sure which;—two little enamel boxes, with looking-glass in the lids, one of them a fairing, the other "a Trifle from Margate"; and lastly, various letters, square and ragged, and directed in all sorts of spellings, chiefly with little letters for capitals. One of them, written by a girl who went to a day-school, is directed "Miss."

In her manners, the Maid-servant sometimes imitates her young mistress; she puts her hair in papers, cultivates a shape, and occasionally contrives to be out of spirits. But her own character and condition overcome all sophistications of this sort; her shape, fortified by the mop and scrubbing-brush, will make its way; and exercise keeps her healthy and cheerful.

From the same cause her temper is good; though she gets into little heats when a stranger is over saucy, or when she is told not to go so heavily down stairs, or when some unthinking person goes up her wet stairs with dirty shoes,—or when she is called away often from dinner; neither does she much like to be seen scrubbing the street-door steps of a morning; and sometimes she catches herself saying, "Drat that butcher," but immediately adds, "God forgive me." The tradesmen indeed, with their compliments and arch looks, seldom give her cause to complain. The milkman bespeaks her good-humour for the day with "Come, pretty maids":—then follow the butcher, the baker, the oilman, etc., all with their several smirks and little loiterings; and when she goes to the shops herself, it is for her the grocer pulls down his string from its roller with more than ordinary whirl, and tosses his parcel into a tie.

Thus pass the mornings between working, and singing, and giggling, and grumbling, and being flattered. If she takes any pleasure unconnected with her office before the afternoon, it is when she runs up the area-steps or to the door to hear and purchase a new song, or to see a troop of soldiers go by; or when she happens to thrust her head out of a chamber window at the same time with a servant at the next house, when a dialogue infallibly ensues, stimulated by the imaginary obstacles between. If the Maid-servant is wise, the best part of her work is done by dinner-time; and nothing else is necessary to give perfect zest to the meal. She tells us what she thinks of it, when she calls it "a bit o' dinner." There is the same sort of eloquence in her other phrase, "a cup o' tea"; but the old ones, and the washerwomen, beat her at that. After tea in great houses, she goes with the other servants to hot cockles, or What-are-my-thoughts-like, and tells Mr. John to "have done then"; or if there is a ball given that night, they throw open the doors, and make use of the music upstairs to dance by. In smaller houses, she receives the visits of her aforesaid cousin; and sits down alone, or with a fellow maid-servant, to work; talks of her young master or mistress and Mr. Ivins (Evans); or else she calls to mind her own friends in the country; where she thinks the cows and "all that" beautiful, now she is away. Meanwhile, if she is lazy, she snuffs the candle with her scissors; or if she has eaten more heartily than usual, she sighs double the usual number of times, and thinks that tender hearts were born to be unhappy.

Such being the Maid-servant's life indoors, she scorns, when

abroad, to be anything but a creature of sheer enjoyment. The Maid-servant, the sailor, and the school-boy, are the three beings that enjoy a holiday beyond all the rest of the world;—and all for the same reason,—because their inexperience, peculiarity of life, and habit of being with persons of circumstances or thoughts above them, give them all, in their way, a cast of the romantic. The most active of the money-getters is a vegetable compared with them. The Maid-servant when she first goes to Vauxhall, thinks she is in heaven. A theatre is all pleasure to her, whatever is going forward, whether the play or the music, or the waiting which makes others impatient, or the munching of apples and gingerbread, which she and her party commence almost as soon as they have seated themselves. She prefers tragedy to comedy, because it is grander, and less like what she meets with in general; and because she thinks it more in earnest also, especially in the love-scenes. Her favourite play is *Alexander the Great, or the Rival Queens*. Another great delight is in going a-shopping. She loves to look at the patterns in the windows, and the fine things labelled with those corpulent numerals of "only 7s."—"only 6s. 6d." She has also, unless born and bred in London, been to see my Lord Mayor, the fine people coming out of Court, and the "beasties" in the Tower; and at all events she has been to Astley's and the Circus, from which she comes away, equally smitten with the rider, and sore with laughing at the clown. But it is difficult to say what pleasure she enjoys most. One of the completest of all is the fair, where she walks through an endless round of noise, and toys, and gallant apprentices, and wonders. Here she is invited in by courteous and well-dressed people, as if she were the mistress. Here also is the conjuror's booth, where the operator himself, a most stately and genteel person all in white, calls her Ma'am; and says to John by her side, in spite of his laced hat, "Be good enough, sir, to hand the card to the lady."

Ah! may her "cousin" turn out as true as he says he is; or may she get home soon enough and smiling enough to be as happy again next time.

FINE DAYS IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

We speak of those days, unexpected, sunshiny, cheerful, even vernal, which come towards the end of January, and are too apt to come alone. They are often set in the midst of a series of rainy ones, like a patch of blue in the sky. Fine weather is much at any time, after or before the end of the year; but, in the latter case, the days are still winter days; whereas, in the former, the year being turned, and March and April before us, we seem to feel the coming of spring. In the streets and squares, the ladies are abroad with their colours and glowing cheeks. If you can hear anything but noise, you hear the sparrows. People anticipate at breakfast the pleasure they shall have in "getting out." The solitary poplar in a corner looks green against the sky; and the brick wall has a warmth in it. Then in the noisier streets, what a multitude and a new life! What horseback! What promenading! What shopping and giving good day! Bonnets encounter bonnets; all the Miss Williamses meet all the Miss Joneses; and everybody wonders, particularly at nothing. The shop-windows, putting forward their best, may be said to be in blossom. The yellow carriages flash in the sunshine; footmen rejoice in their white calves, not dabbed, as usual, with rain; the gossips look out of their three-pairs-of-stairs windows; other windows are thrown open; fruiterers' shops look well, swelling with full baskets; pavements are found to be dry; lap-dogs frisk under their asthmas; and old gentlemen issue forth, peering up at the region of the north-east.

Then in the country, how emerald the green, how open-looking the prospect! Honeysuckles (a name alone with a garden in it) are detected in blossom; the hazel follows; the snowdrop hangs its white perfection, exquisite with green; we fancy the trees are already thicker; voices of winter birds are taken for new ones; and in February the new ones come—the thrush, the chaffinch, and the woodlark. Then rooks begin to pair; and the wagtail dances in the lane. As we write this article, the sun is on our paper, and chanticleer (the same, we trust, that we heard the other day) seems to crow in a very different style, lord of the ascendant, and as willing to be with his wives abroad as at home. We think we see him, as in Chaucer's homestead:

He looketh, as it were, a grim leoùn;
And on his toes he roameth up and down;
Him deigneth not to set his foot to ground;
He clucketh when he hath a corn yfound,
And to him runnen then his wivès all.

Will the reader have the rest of the picture, as Chaucer gave it? It is as bright and strong as the day itself, and as suited to it as a falcon to a knight's fist. Hear how the old poet throws forth his strenuous music; as fine, considered as mere music and versification, as the description is pleasant and noble.

His comb was redder than the fine coràll,
Embattled as it were a castle wall;
His bill was black, and as the jet it shone;
Like azure was his leggès and his tone;
His nailès whiter than the lilly flower,
And like the burnèd gold was his coloùr.

Hardly one pause like the other throughout, and yet all flowing and sweet. The pause on the third syllable in the last line but one, and that on the sixth in the last, together with the deep variety of vowels, make a beautiful concluding couplet; and indeed the whole is a study for versification. So little were those old poets unaware of their task, as some are apt to suppose them; and so little have others dreamt, that they surpassed them in their own pretensions. The accent, it is to be observed, in those concluding words, as *coral* and *colour*, is to be thrown on the last syllable, as it is in Italian. *Colòr, colòre*, and Chaucer's old Anglo-Gallican word, is a much nobler one than our modern one *còlour*. We have injured many such words, by throwing back the accent.

We should beg pardon for this digression, if it had not been part of our understood agreement with the reader to be as desultory as we please, and as befits Companions. Our very enjoyment of the day we are describing would not let us be otherwise. It is also an old fancy of ours to associate the ideas of Chaucer with that of any early and vigorous manifestation of light and pleasure. He is not only the "morning star" of our poetry, as Denham called him, but the morning itself, and a good bit of the noon; and we could as soon help quoting him at the beginning of the year, as we could help wishing to hear the cry of primroses, and thinking of the sweet faces that buy them.

BAD WEATHER

After longing these two months for some "real winter weather," the public have had a good sharp specimen, a little too real. We mean to take our revenge by writing an article upon it after a good breakfast, with our feet at a good fire, and in a room quiet enough to let us hear the fire as well as feel it. Outside the casement (for we are writing this in a cottage) the east-wind is heard, cutting away like a knife; snow is on the ground; there is frost and sleet at once; and the melancholy crow of poor chanticleer at a distance seems complaining that nobody will cherish him. One imagines that his toes must be cold; and that he is drawing comparisons between the present feeling of his sides, and the warmth they enjoy next his plump wife on a perch.

But in the country there is always something to enjoy. There is the silence, if nothing else; you feel that the air is healthy; and you can see to write. Think of a street in London, at once narrow, foggy, and noisy; the snow thawing, not because the frost has not returned, but because the union of mud and smoke prevails against it; and then the unnatural cold sound of the clank of milk-pails (if you are up early enough); or, if you are not, the chill, damp, strawy, rickety hackney-coaches going by, with fellows inside of them with cold feet, and the coachman a mere bundle of rags, blue nose, and jolting. (He'll quarrel with every fare, and the passenger knows it, and will resist. So they will stand with their feet in the mud, haggling. The old gentleman saw an extra charge of a shilling in his face.) To complete the misery, the pedestrians kick, as they go, those detestable flakes of united snow and mud,—at least they ought to do so, to complete our picture; and at night-time, people coming home hardly know whether or not they have chins.

But is there no comfort then in a London street in such weather? Infinite, if people will but have it, and families are good-tempered. We trust we shall be read by hundreds of such this morning. Of some we are certain; and do hereby, agreeably to our ubiquitous privileges, take several breakfasts at once. How pleasant is this rug! How bright and generous the fire! How charming the fair makers of the tea! And how happy that they have not to make it themselves, the drinkers of it! Even the hackney-coachman means to get double as much as usual to-day, either by cheating or being pathetic; and the old gentleman is resolved to make amends for the necessity of his

morning drive, by another pint of wine at dinner, and crumpets with his tea. It is not by grumbling against the elements, that evil is to be done away; but by keeping oneself in good heart with one's fellow-creatures, and remembering that they are all capable of partaking our pleasures. The contemplation of pain, acting upon a splenetic temperament, produces a stirring reformer here and there, who does good rather out of spite against wrong, than sympathy with pleasure, and becomes a sort of disagreeable angel. Far be it from us, in the present state of society, to wish that no such existed! But they will pardon us for labouring in the vocation, to which a livelier nature calls us, and drawing a distinction between the dissatisfaction that ends in good, and the mere commonplace grumbling that in a thousand instances to one ends in nothing but plaguing everybody as well as the grumbler. In almost all cases, those who are in a state of pain themselves, are in the fairest way for giving it; whereas, pleasure is in its nature social. The very abuses of it (terrible as they sometimes are) cannot do as much harm as the violations of the common sense of good-humour; simply because it is its nature to go with, and not counter to humanity. The only point to take care of is, that as many innocent sources of pleasure are kept open as possible, and affection and imagination brought in to show us what they are, and how surely all may partake of them. We are not likely to forget that a human being is of importance, when we can discern the merits of so small a thing as a leaf, or a honey-bee, or the beauty of a flake of snow, or the fanciful scenery made by the glowing coals in a fire-place. Professors of sciences may do this. Writers of the most enthusiastic in a good cause, may sometimes lose sight of their duties, by reason of the very absorption in their enthusiasm. Imagination itself cannot always be abroad and at home at the same time. But the many are not likely to think too deeply of anything; and the more pleasures that are taught them by dint of an agreeable exercise of their reflection, the more they will learn to reflect on all round them, and to endeavour that their reflections may have a right to be agreeable. Any increase of the sum of our enjoyments almost invariably produces a wish to communicate them. An overindulged human being is ruined by being taught to think of nobody but himself; but a human being, at once gratified and made to think of others, learns to add to his very pleasures in the act of diminishing them.

But how, it may be said, are we to enjoy ourselves with

reflection, when our very reflection will teach us the quantity of suffering that exists? How are we to be happy with breakfasting and warming our hands, when so many of our fellow-creatures are, at that instant, cold and hungry?—It is no paradox to answer, that the fact of our remembering them, gives us a right to forget them:—we mean, that "there is a time for all things," and that having done our duty at other times in sympathising with pain, we have not only a right, but it becomes our duty, to show the happy privileges of virtue by sympathising with pleasure. The best person in a holiday-making party is bound to have the liveliest face; or if not that, a face too happy even to be lively. Suppose, in order to complete the beauty of it, that the face is a lady's. She is bound, if any uneasy reflection crosses her mind, to say to herself, "To this happiness I have contributed;—pain I have helped to diminish; I am sincere, and wish well to everybody; and I think everybody would be as good as I am, perhaps better, if society were wise. Now society, I trust, is getting wiser; perhaps will beat all our wisdom a hundred years hence; and meanwhile, I must not show that goodness is of no use, but let it realise all it can, and be as merry as the youngest." So saying, she gives her hand to a friend for a new dance, and really forgets what she has been thinking of, in the blithe spinning of her blood. A good-hearted woman, in the rosy beauty of her joy, is the loveliest object in ——. But everybody knows that.

Adam Smith, in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, has rebuked Thomson for his famous apostrophe in *Winter* to the "gay, licentious proud"; where he says, that amidst their dances and festivities they little think of the misery that is going on in the world:—because, observes the philosopher, upon this principle there never could be any enjoyment in the world, unless every corner of it were happy; which would be preposterous. We need not say how entirely we agree with the philosopher in the abstract: and certainly the poet would deserve the rebuke, had he addressed himself only to the "gay"; but then his gay are also "licentious," and not only licentious but "proud." Now we confess we would not be too squeamish even about the thoughtlessness of these gentry, for is not their very thoughtlessness their excuse? And are they not brought up in it, just as a boy in St. Giles's is brought up in thievery, or a girl to callousness and prostitution? It is not the thoughtless in high life from whom we are to expect any good, lecture them as we may: and observe—Thomson himself does not say how cruel they are;

or what a set of rascals to dance and be merry in spite of their better knowledge. He says,

> Ah *little think* the gay, licentious proud—

and so they do. And so they will, till the diffusion of thought, among all classes, flows, of necessity, into their gay rooms and startled elevations; and forces them to look out upon the world, that they may not be lost by being under the level.

We had intended a very merry paper this week, to bespeak the favour of our new readers:—

> "A very merry, dancing, drinking, dancing,
> Laughing, quaffing, and unthinking" paper—

as Dryden has it. But the Christmas holidays are past; and it is their termination, we suppose, that has made us serious. Sitting up at night also is a great inducer of your moral remark; and if we are not so pleasant as we intended to be, it is because some friends of ours, the other night, were the pleasantest people in the world till five in the morning.

RAINY-DAY POETRY

> . . . Discessit ab astris
> Humor, et ima petit.—LUCAN.
>
> Humour sets the welkin free,
> And condescends with you and me.

CRITICS lament over a number of idle rhymes in the works of Swift, that may come under the above title; and wish, at least, that they had never been published. They designate them as the sweepings of his study, his private weaknesses, unworthy of so great a genius, and exclaim against his friends for collecting them. I really cannot see the humiliation. If he had written nothing else, there might be some colour of accusation against him; though I do not see why a dean is bound to be a dull private gentleman. But if he had written nothing else, I think it may be pretty safely pronounced that he would not have written these trifles. They bear the mark of a great hand, trifling as they are. Their extravagance is that of power, not of weakness; and the wilder Irish waggery of Dr. Sheridan, slatternly and muddled, stands rebuked before them. What should we have done had we lost Mary the Cook-maid's Letter, and the Grand

Question about the Barracks? These, to be sure, are excepted by everybody; but I like, for my part, to hear all that such an exquisite wag has to say. I except the coarseness of two or three pieces, which I never read. I wish the critics could say as much. I have such a disgust of this kind of writing that there are poems, even in Chaucer, which I never look at. But this does not hinder me from loving all the rest. Perhaps I carry my dislike of what I allude to too far. It is possible that it may not be without its use in certain stages of society. But so it is, and I mention it, that I may not be thought to be confounding or recommending two different things.

It is our own fault if we take this Rainy-Day Poetry for more than the author intended it. It is our loss if we do not take it for as much. I give it this title, because we may suppose it written to while away the tedium of rainy days, or of the feelings that resemble it. There is also Rainy-Day Prose, of a great deal of which my own writings are composed, though I was hardly aware of it at the time. I relish all that Swift has favoured us with, of either kind. The only approach that we minor humorists can make to such men, is to show that we understand them in all their moods,—that nothing is lost on us. The greatest fit of laughter I ever remember to have had, was in reading the *Commination* piece against William Wood, in which all his enemies are introduced execrating him in puns. The zest was heightened by the presence of a deaf old lady, who had desired a friend of mine and myself to take a book, while waiting to see a kinsman of hers. Her imperturbable face, the shocking things we said before her, and even the dread of being thought rude, produced a sort of double drama in our minds, extreme and irresistible.

A periodical writer derives the same privileges from necessity which other men do from wit. The rainy days here in Italy are very rare compared with those of England; but the damps which the latter produce within us sometimes make their appearance when we are away; and a . . . In short, it is not necessary to inform the reader that periodical writers produce a great deal of rainy-day poetry, voluntary or involuntary. If he excuses it, all is well. I shall, therefore, whenever I am inclined, make use of this title to pass off rhymes that I have more pleasure in writing than in publishing. The other day I was moved to vent my pluviose indignation on the subject of Ferdinand, King of Spain, a personage who has had the extraordinary fortune (even for a prince) to become the spectacle

of the whole world, precisely because he is destitute of every quality which deserves their notice. That my poem might be as small as my subject, I wrote it in Lilliputian lines and miniature cantos; but in consequence of the variety of feelings that pressed upon me as I proceeded, three out of the four became neither one thing nor t'other, and are not worth indulgence. The exordium I lay before the reader, because it contains an anecdote of his majesty's first appearance on the stage, with which he may not be acquainted. I had it from a Spanish gentleman now in England.

I sing the least of things,—
To wit, the least of kings.

Imprimis, when the nation
First raised him to his station,
And blest him as he rid
In triumph to Madrid,
A gentleman who saw him
(And hugely longed to claw him
Said, that he never showed
One feeling on the road,
But sat in stupid pride,
Staring on either side,
Letting his hand be kissed
(I think I see the fist),
As if, where'er they took it,
They meant to pick his pocket;
And goggling like an owl,—
The hideous beaky fool!

The last line is emphatic! I had not patience to continue in a proper style of burlesque. Ferdinand has astonished even those who were never astonished at kings before. And yet what was to be expected from this portentous specimen of royalty,—royalty, naked, instinctive, unmitigated, unadorned? What examples he had before him! What an education! What contempt of decencies, public and private! What a mother, what a minister, what a father! The same gentleman who related to me the above anecdote told me that he had seen the old king dining in public, and that the spectacle was disgusting beyond description. Such brutal feeding, such pawing and grinding, such absorption in the immediate appetite and will, and contempt of everything else in the world, could only be exhibited by one who was accustomed to set up the mere consciousness of royalty as superior to every other consideration. This is Ferdinand's principle. He has no other, nor ever had, even when he petitioned to be made a member of Bonaparte's family. Bonaparte dazzled him, like something supernatural,

and was an emperor to boot; but if he had not been one, it would have made no difference. The royal will, the immediate security, interest, or even whim, sanctions everything; and royalty is to come out clear from the furnace upon the strength of its divine right, let it have gone through what it may. How much right have we to complain of it, flattering it as we do, even in the best regulated monarchies? The frog in the fable swelled herself to bursting, as it was; but if she had, besides, had all frogland for spectators and applauders, if she had been puffed up with huzzas! and vivas! and been made a worshipped spectacle wherever she carried herself, who would have wondered at all her children's bursting themselves, one after the other, in spite of her example? I pity, for my part (next to suffering nations), every king in existence, except Ferdinand; and will pity him too when he is put out of a condition to slaughter those who would have made him an honest man.

Pleasant C. R.! let me recall my happier rhymes and rainy days by thinking of thee. C. R. is one of those happy persons whom goodness, imagination, and a tranquil art conspire to keep in a perpetual youth. He and his brother once called upon a man whom I knew, who told me he had seen "the young gentlemen," and yet this man was not old, and C. R. was seven-and-thirty if he was a day. C. R. has a quaint manner with him, which some take for simplicity. It is, but not of the sort which they take it for. I could hear it talk for an hour together, and have heard it, delighting all the while at the interest he can take in a trifle, and the entertainment he can raise out of it. His simplicity is anything but foolishness, though it is full of *bonhomie*. He is a nice observer. At the same time he is as romantic as a sequestered schoolmaster, and will make as grave Latin quotations. He produces a history out of a whistle. He will describe to you a steam-engine or a water-mill, with all the machinery and the noise to boot, till you die at once with laughter and real interest at the gravity of his enthusiasm. He makes them appear living things, as the fulling-mills did to Don Quixote. One day he gave us all an account of a man he had seen in the Strand, who was standing with a pole in his hand, at the top of which was a bladder, and underneath the bladder a bill. He told us what a mystery this excited in the minds of the spectators, and how they looked, first at "the man," then at "the bill," and then "at the bladder";—and again, said he, they looked at the bladder, then at the bill, and so on, ringing the changes on these words till we saw nothing

before us in life but a man holding these two phenomena. We begged him to change the word "man" into "body," that charm of alliteration might be added; and he complied with a passing laugh, and the greatest good-nature conceivable, entering into the joke, and yet feeling a real gravity in commenting upon the people's astonishment. This combination of "bill, body, and bladder" was, after all, nothing but a man standing with an advertisement of blacking, or an eating-house, or some such thing. We have been thankful ever since that "such things are."

I once rode with C. R. from Gainsborough to Doncaster, making rhymes with him all the way on the word philosopher. We made a hundred and fifty, and were only stopped by arriving at our journey's end. Readers uninitiated in doggerel may be startled at this; but nothing is more true. The *words* were all different, and legitimate doggerel rhymes; though, undoubtedly, the *rhymes* themselves must often have been repeated, that is to say the same consonants must have begun them. The following is a rainy-day production on the same subject, exhausting, we believe, the real alphabetical quantum of rhymes, with their combinations. But it is submitted with deference to the learned. We dedicate it to our pleasant friend, heartily wishing we could have such another ride with him to-morrow.

'You talk of rhyming to the word Philosopher.—
That jade the Muse! It's doubtless very cross of her
To stint one even in rhymes, which are the dross of her;
I can't but think that it's extremely gross of her:
I told her once how very wrong it was of her:
If I could help, I'd not ask one, that's poz, of her:
I would not quote *procumbit humis bos* of her;
Nor earn a single lettuce yclept Cos of her;
I would not speak to Valcnaer or to Voss of her:
Nor Dryden's self, although the Great High Joss of her:
I would not care for the *divinum os* of her.
No, though she rhymed me the whole *mos, flos, ros,* of her:
Walking in woods I wouldn't brush the moss off her:
Nor in the newest green grown take the gloss of her:
In winter-time I wouldn't keep the snows off her:
And yet I don't think either I could go so far:
Thy anger, certainly, I couldn't show so far:
I didn't think the hatchet I could throw so far.
Good heavens! now I reflect, I love the nose of her:
I could cut off my hair to tie the hose of her:
The brightest eyes are nothing to the doze of her:
Love in my heart the smallest keepsake stows of her:
Oh, for as many kisses as I chose of her!
Since I had one there's no sweet air but blows of her:
There's not a stream but murmurs as it flows of her:
I could exalt to heav'n the very clothes of her.
I wonder how a man can speak in prose of her:

Yet some have e'en said ill (while my blood froze) of her:
Never again shall any be that crows offer
To do her harm, or with his *quid pro quos* huff her.
With pleasure I could every earthly woe suffer
Rather than see the charmer's little toe suffer:
'Tis only gouty Muses that should so suffer

THE ITALIAN GIRL

THE sun was shining beautifully one summer evening, as if he bade sparkling farewell to a world which he had made happy. It seemed also, by his looks, as if he promised to make his appearance again to-morrow; but there was at times a deep breathing western wind, and dark purple clouds came up here and there, like gorgeous waiters at a funeral. The children in a village not far from the metropolis were playing however on the green, content with the brightness of the moment, when they saw a female approaching, who gathered them about her by the singularity of her dress. It was not a very remarkable dress; but any difference from the usual apparel of their countrywomen appeared so to them; and crying out, "A French girl! A French girl!" they ran up to her, and stood looking and talking.

The stranger seated herself upon a bench that was fixed between two elms, and for a moment leaned her head against one of them, as if faint with walking. But she raised it speedily, and smiled with complacency on the rude urchins. She had a boddice and petticoat on of different colours, and a handkerchief tied neatly about her head with the point behind. On her hands were gloves without fingers; and she wore about her neck a guitar, upon the strings of which one of her hands rested. The children thought her very handsome. Anybody else would also have thought her very ill; but they saw nothing before them but a good-natured looking foreigner and a guitar, and they asked her to play. "*O che bei ragazzi!*" said she, in a soft and almost inaudible voice;—"*Che visi lieti!*"[1] and she began to play. She tried to sing too, but her voice failed her, and she shook her head smilingly, saying "*Stanca! stanca!*"[2] "Sing—do sing," said the children; and nodding her head, she was trying to do so, when a set of boys came up and joined in the request. "No, no," said one of the elder boys, "she is not well. You are

[1] O what fine boys! What happy faces!
[2] Weary! Weary!

ill, a'nt you,—Miss?" added he, laying his hand upon hers as if to hinder it. He drew out the last word somewhat doubtfully, for her appearance perplexed him; he scarcely knew whether to take her for a strolling musician or a lady strayed from a sick bed. "*Grazie!*" said she, understanding his look:—"*troppo stanca! troppo!*" [1]

By this time the usher came up, and addressed her in French; but she only understood a word here and there. He then spoke Latin, and she repeated one or two of his words, as if they were familiar to her.

"She is an Italian!" said he, looking round with a good-natured importance; "for the Italian is but a bastard of the Latin." The children looked with the more wonder, thinking he was speaking of the fair musician.

"*Non dubito,*" continued the usher, "*quin tu lectitas poetam illum celeberrimum Tassonem?* [2] *Taxum,* I should say properly, but the departure from the Italian name is considerable." The stranger did not understand a word.

"I speak of Tasso," said the usher,—"of Tasso."

"*Tasso! Tasso!*" repeated the fair minstrel; "*oh—conosco—il Tàs-so!*" [3] and she hung with an accent of beautiful languor upon the first syllable.

"Yes," returned the worthy scholar, "doubtless your accent may be better. Then of course you know those classical lines:

> Intanto Erminia infra l'ombrosy pianty
> D'antica selva dal cavallo—*what is it?*"

The stranger repeated the words in a tone of fondness, like those of an old friend:

> Intanto Erminia infra l'ombrose piante
> D'antica selva dal cavallo è scorta;
> Nè più governa il fren la man tremante,
> E mezza quasi par tra viva e morta.[4]

Our usher's commonplace book had supplied him with a fortunate passage, for it was a favourite one of her countrywomen. It also singularly applied to her situation. There was a sort of exquisite mixture of clearness in her utterance of these verses, which gave some of the children a better idea of

[1] Thanks:—too weary! too weary!
[2] Doubtless you read that celebrated poet Tasso?
[3] Oh—I know—Tasso.
[4] Meantime in the old wood, the palfrey bore
Erminia deeper into shade and shade;
Her trembling hands could hold him in no more,
And she appeared betwixt alive and dead.

French than they had had; for they could not get it out of their heads that she must be a French girl;—"Italian-French perhaps," said one of them. But her voice trembled as she went on, like the hand she spoke of.

"I have heard my poor cousin Montague sing those very lines," said the boy who prevented her from playing.

"Montague," repeated the stranger very plainly, but turning paler and fainter. She put one of her hands in turn upon the boy's affectionately, and pointed towards the spot where the church was.

"Yes, yes," cried the boy;—"why, she knew my cousin:—she must have known him in Florence."

"I told you," said the usher, "she was an Italian."

"Help her to my aunt's," continued the youth, "she'll understand her:—lean upon me, Miss"; and he repeated the last word without his former hesitation.

Only a few boys followed her to the door, the rest having been awed away by the usher. As soon as the stranger entered the house and saw an elderly lady, who received her kindly, she exclaimed "La Signora Madre," and fell in a swoon at her feet.

She was taken to bed, and attended with the utmost care by her hostess, who would not suffer her to talk till she had had a sleep. She merely heard enough to find out, that the stranger had known her son in Italy; and she was thrown into a painful state of suspicion by the poor girl's eyes, which followed her about the room till the lady fairly came up and closed them.

"Obedient! obedient!" said the patient: "obedient in everything: only the Signora will let me kiss her hand"; and taking it with her own trembling one, she laid her cheek upon it, and it staid there till she had dropt asleep for weariness.

". . . Silken rest
Tie all thy cares up!"

thought her kind watcher, who was doubly thrown upon a recollection of that beautiful passage in Beaumont and Fletcher, by the suspicion she had of the cause of the girl's visit. "And yet," thought she, turning her eyes with a thin tear in them towards the church spire, "he was an excellent boy,—the boy of my heart."

When the stranger woke, the secret was explained: and if the mind of her hostess was relieved, it was only the more touched with pity, and indeed moved with respect and admiration. The dying girl (for she evidently was dying, and happy at the thought of it) was the niece of an humble tradesman in Florence,

at whose house young Montague, who was a gentleman of small fortune, had lodged and fallen sick during his travels. She was a lively, good-natured girl, whom he used to hear coquetting and playing the guitar with her neighbours; and it was greatly on this account, that her considerate and hushing gravity struck him whenever she entered his room. One day he heard no more coquetting, nor even the guitar. He asked the reason, when she came to give him some drink; and she said she had heard him mention some noise that disturbed him.

"But you do not call your voice and your music a noise," said he, "do you, Rosaura? I hope not, for I had expected it would give me strength to get rid of this fever and reach home."

Rosaura turned pale, and let the patient into a secret; but what surprised and delighted him was, that she played her guitar nearly as often as before, and sang too, only less sprightly airs.

"You get better and better, Signor," said she, "every day, and your mother will see you and be happy. I hope you will tell her what a good doctor you had."

"The best in the world," cried he; and as he sat up in bed, he put his arm round her waist and kissed her.

"Pardon me, Signora," said the poor girl to her hostess; "but I felt that arm round my waist for a week after: ay, almost as much as if it had been there."

"And Charles felt that you did," thought his mother; "for he never told me the story."

"He begged my pardon," continued she, "as I was hastening out of the room, and hoped I should not construe his warmth into impertinence. And to hear him talk so to me, who used to fear what he might think of myself; it made me stand in the passage, and lean my head against the wall, and weep such bitter, and yet such sweet tears!—But he did not hear them. No, Madam, he did not know, indeed, how much I—how much I——"

"Loved him, child," interrupted Mrs. Montague; "you have a right to say so, and I wish he had been alive to say as much to you himself."

"Oh, good God!" said the dying girl, her tears flowing away, "this is too great a happiness for me, to hear his own mother talking so." And again she lays her weak head upon the lady's hand.

The latter would have persuaded her to sleep again; but she said she could not for joy: "for I'll tell you, Madam," continued

she, "I do not believe you will think it foolish, for something very grave at my heart tells me it is not so; but I have had a long thought," (and her voice and look grew more exalted as she spoke,) "which has supported me through much toil and many disagreeable things to this country and this place; and I will tell you what it is, and how it came into my mind. I received this letter from your son."

Here she drew out a paper which, though carefully wrapped up in several others, was much worn at the sides. It was dated from the village, and ran thus:

"This comes from the Englishman whom Rosaura nursed so kindly at Florence. She will be sorry to hear that her kindness was in vain, for he is dying; and he sometimes fears that her sorrow will be greater than he could wish it to be. But marry one of your kind countrymen, my good girl; for all must love Rosaura who know her. If it shall be my lot ever to meet her in heaven, I will thank her as a blessed tongue only can."

"As soon as I read this letter, Madam," continues Rosaura, "and what he said about heaven, it flashed into my head, that though I did not deserve him on earth, I might, perhaps, by trying and patience, deserve to be joined with him in heaven, where there is no distinction of persons. My uncle was pleased to see me become a religious pilgrim; but he knew as little of the world as I, and I found that I could earn my way to England better, and quite as religiously, by playing my guitar, which was also more independent; and I had often heard your son talk of independence and freedom, and commend me for doing what he was pleased to call so much kindness to others. So I played my guitar from Florence all the way to England, and all that I earned by it I gave away to the poor, keeping enough to procure me lodging. I lived on bread and water, and used to weep happy tears over it, because I looked up to heaven and thought he might see me. I have sometimes, though not often, met with small insults; but if ever they threatened to grow greater, I begged the people to desist in the kindest way I could, even smiling, and saying I would please them if I had the heart; which might be wrong, but it seemed as if deep thoughts told me to say so; and they used to look astonished, and left off; which made me the more hope that St. Philip and the Holy Virgin did not think ill of my endeavours. So playing, and giving alms in this manner, I arrived in the neighbourhood of your beloved village, where I fell sick for a while, and was very kindly treated in an outhouse; though the people, I

thought, seemed to look strange and afraid on this crucifix—(though your son never did),—though he taught me to think kindly of everybody, and hope the best, and leave everything, except our own endeavours, to Heaven. I fell sick, Madam, because I found for certain that the Signor Montague was dead, albeit I had no hope that he was alive."

She stopped awhile for breath, for she was growing weaker and weaker, and her hostess would fain have had her keep silence; but she pressed her hand as well as she might, and prayed with such a patient panting of voice to be allowed to go on, that she was. She smiled thankfully and resumed:

"So when—so when I got my strength a little again, I walked on and came to the beloved village, and I saw the beautiful white church spire in the trees; and then I knew where his body slept, and I thought some kind person would help me to die, with my face looking towards the church as it now does; and death is upon me, even now: but lift me a little higher on the pillows, dear lady, that I may see the green ground of the hill."

She was raised up as she wished, and after looking awhile with a placid feebleness at the hill, said in a very low voice, "Say one prayer for me, dear lady; and if it be not too proud in me, call me in it your daughter."

The mother of her beloved summoned up a grave and earnest voice, as well as she might, and knelt and said, "O Heavenly Father of us all, who in the midst of Thy manifold and merciful bounties bringest us into strong passes of anguish, which nevertheless Thou enablest us to go through, look down, we beseech Thee, upon this Thy young and innocent servant, the daughter—that might have been—of my heart, and enable her spirit to pass through the struggling bonds of mortality, and be gathered into Thy rest with those we love. Do, dear and great God, of Thy infinite mercy, for we are poor weak creatures, both young and old——" here her voice melted away into a breathing tearfulness; and after remaining on her knees a moment longer, she rose and looked upon the bed, and saw that the weary smiling one was no more.

POETS' HOUSES

A PAPER in Mr. [Isaac] Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature* upon "Literary Residences," is very amusing and curious; but it begins with a mistake in saying that "men of genius have usually been condemned to compose their finest works, which are usually their earliest ones, under the roof of a garret"; and the author seems to think, that few have realised the sort of house they wished to live in. The combination of "genius and a garret" is an old joke, but little more. Genius has been often poor enough, but seldom so much so as to want what are looked upon as the decencies of life. In point of abode, in particular, we take it to have been generally lucky as to the fact, and not at all so grand in the desire as Mr. Disraeli seems to imagine. Ariosto, who raised such fine structures in his poetry, was asked indeed how he came to have no greater one when he built a house for himself; and he answered, that "palaces are easier built with words than stones." It was a pleasant answer, and fit for the interrogator; but Ariosto valued himself much upon the snug little abode which he did build, as may be seen by the inscription still remaining upon it at Ferrara;[1] and we will venture to say for the cordial, tranquillity-loving poet, that he would rather live in such a house as that, and amuse himself with building palaces in his poetry, than have undergone the fatigue, and drawn upon himself the publicity, of erecting a princely mansion, full of gold and marble. No mansion which he could have built would have equalled what he could fancy; and poets love nests from which they can take their flights—not worlds of wood and stone to strut in, and give them a sensation. If so, they would have set their wits to get rich, and live accordingly; which none of them ever did yet,—at any rate, not the greatest. Ariosto notoriously neglected his "fortunes"—in that sense of the word. Shakespeare had the felicity of building a house for himself, and settling in his native town; but though the best *in* it, it was nothing equal to the "seats" outside of it (where the richer men of the district lived); and it appears to have been a "modest mansion," not bigger, for instance, than a good-sized house in Red Lion Street, or some other old quarter in the metropolis. Suppose he had set *his* great wits to rise in the State and accumulate money, like Lionel

[1] See an engraving of the house itself, with its inscription, in the *Gallery of Portraits* No. XXVIII., Article—"Ariosto." But it wants the garden-ground which belonged to it.

Cranfield, for example, or Thomas Cromwell, the blacksmith's son. We know that any man who chooses to begin systematically with a penny, under circumstances at all favourable, may end with thousands. Suppose Shakespeare had done it; he might have built a house like a mountain. But he did not,—it will be said,—because he was a poet, and poets are not getters of money. Well; and for the same reason, poets do not care for the mightiest things which money can get. It cannot get them health, and freedom, and a life in the green fields, and mansions in fairy-land; and they prefer those, and a modest visible lodging.

Chaucer had a great large house to live in,—a castle,—because he was connected with royalty; but he does not delight to talk of such places: he is all for the garden, and the daisied fields, and a bower like a "pretty parlour." His mind was too big for a great house; which challenges measurement with its inmates, and is generally equal to them. He felt elbow-room, and heart-room, only out in God's air, or in the heart itself, or in the bowers built by Nature, and reminding him of the greatness of her love.

Spenser lived at one time in a castle,—in Ireland,—a piece of forfeited property, given him for political services; and he lived to repent it: for it was burnt in civil warfare, and his poor child burnt with it; and the poet was driven back to England, broken-hearted. But look at the houses he describes in his poems,—even he who was bred in a court, and loved pomp, after his fashion. He bestows the great ones upon princes and allegorical personages, who live in state and have many servants, (for the largest houses, after all, are but collections of small ones, and of unfitting neighbourhoods too); but his nests, his poetic bowers, his *deliciæ* and *amœnitates*, he keeps for his hermits and his favourite nymphs, and his flowers of courtesy; and observe how he delights to repeat the word "little," when describing them. His travellers come to "little valleys," in which, through the the tree-tops, comes reeking up a "little smoke," (a "chearefull signe," quoth the poet,) and

> To *little* in cots which the shepherds lie;

and though all his little cots are not happy, yet he is ever happiest when describing them, should they be so, and showing in what sort of contentment his mind delighted finally to rest.

> A *little* lowly heritage it was,
> Down in a dale, hard by a forest's side,
> Far from resort of people, that did pass
> In travel to and fro. A *little* wide

There was an holy chappell edifyde,
Wherein the hermit dewly wont to say
His holy things each morn and eventide;
Thereby a crystall streame did gently play,
Which from a sacred fountain welled forth alway.

Arrived there, the *little* house they fill,
Nor look for entertainment where none was;
Rest is their feast, and all things at their will;
The noblest mind the best contentment has.

Milton, who built the Pandemonium, and filled it with

A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,

was content if he could but get a "garden-house" to live in, as it was called in his time; that is to say, a small house in the suburbs, with a bit of garden to it. He required nothing but a tree or two about him, to give him "airs of Paradise." His biographer shows us, that he made a point of having a residence of this kind. He lived as near as he could to the wood-side and the fields, like his fellow-patriot, M. Béranger, who would have been the Andrew Marvell of those times, and adorned his great friend as the other did, or like his Mirth (*l'Allegro*) visiting his Melancholy.

And hear beloved Cowley, quiet and pleasant as the sound in his trees:—"I never had any other desire so strong, and so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always,—that I might be master at last of a *small* house and *large* garden, with very moderate conveniences joined to them, and there dedicate the remainder of my life only to the culture of them, and study of nature; and there, with no design beyond my wall,

whole and entire to lie,
In no unactive ease, and no unglorious poverty.
The Garden.

"I confess," says he, in another essay (*On Greatness*), "I love littleness almost in all things,—a little convenient estate, a little cheerful house, a little company, and a very little feast; and if ever I were to fall in love again (which is a great passion, and therefore I hope I have done with it), it would be, I think, with prettiness, rather than with majestical beauty."

(What charming writing!—how charming *as* writing, as well as thinking! and charming in both respects, because it possesses the only real perfection of either,—truth of feeling.)

Cowley, to be sure, got such a house as he wanted "at last," and was not so happy in it as he expected to be; but then it was because he did only get it "*at last*," when he was growing old, and was in bad health. Neither might he have ever been

so happy in such a place as he supposed (blest are the poets, surely, in enjoying happiness even in imagination!) yet he would have been less comfortable in a house less to his taste.

Dryden lived in a house in Gerrard Street (then almost a suburb), looking, at the back, into the gardens of Leicester House, the mansion of the Sidneys. Pope had a nest at Twickenham, much smaller than the fine house since built upon the site; and Thomson another at Richmond, consisting only of the ground-floor of the present house. Everybody knows what a rural house Cowper lived in. Shenstone's was but a farm adorned, and his bad health unfortunately hindered *him* from enjoying it. He married a house and grounds, poor man! instead of a wife; which was being very "one-sided" in his poetry —and he found them more expensive than Miss Dolman would have been. He had better have taken poor Maria first, and got a few domestic cares of a handsome sort, to keep him alive and moving. Most of the living poets are dwellers in cottages, except Mr. Rogers, who is rich, and has a mansion, looking on one of the parks; but there it *does* look—upon grass and trees. He will have as much nature with his art as he can get. Next to a cottage of the most comfortable order, we should prefer, for our parts, if we must have servants and a household, one of those good old mansions of the Tudor age, or some such place, which looks like a sort of cottage-palace, and is full of old corners, old seats in the windows, and old memories. The servants, in such a case, would probably have grown old in one's family, and become friends; and this makes a great difference in the possible comfort of a great house. It gives it old family warmth.

A WALK FROM DULWICH TO BROCKHAM

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND

With an original Circumstance or two respecting Dr. Johnson

Dear Sir,

As other calls upon my pilgrimage in this world have interrupted those weekly voyages of discovery into green lanes and rustic houses of entertainment which you and I had so agreeably commenced, I thought I could not do better than make you partaker of my new journey, as far as pen and paper could do it.

You are therefore to look upon yourself as having resolved to take a walk of twenty or thirty miles into Surrey without knowing anything of the matter. You will have set out with us a fortnight ago, and will be kind enough to take your busts for chambermaids, and your music (which is not so easy) for the voices of stage-coachmen.

Illness, you know, does not hinder me from walking; neither does anxiety. On the contrary, the more I walk, the better and stouter I become; and I believe if everybody were to regard the restlessness which anxiety creates, as a signal from nature to get up and contend with it in that manner, people would find the benefit of it. This is more particularly the case if they are lovers of Nature, as well as pupils of her, and have an eye for the beauties in which her visible world abounds; and as I may claim the merit of loving her heartily, and even of tracing my sufferings (when I have them) to her cause, the latter are never so great but she repays me with some sense of sweetness, and leaves me a certain property in the delight of others, when I have little of my own.

"Oh that I had the wings of a dove!" said the royal poet; "then would I fly away and be at rest." I believe there are few persons, who having felt sorrow, and anticipating a journey not exactly towards it, have not partaken of this sense of the desirability of remoteness. A great deal of what we love in poetry is founded upon it; nor do any feel it with more passion, than those whose sense of duty to their fellow-creatures will not allow them to regard retirement as anything but a refreshment between their tasks, and as a wealth of which all ought to partake.

But David sighed for remoteness, and not for solitude. At least, if he did, the cares of the moment must have greatly overbalanced the habits of the poet. Neither doves nor poets can very well do without a companion. Be that as it may, the writer of this epistle, who is a still greater lover of companionship than poetry (and he cannot express his liking more strongly, had not the misfortune, on the present occasion, of being compelled to do without it; and as to remoteness, though his pilgrimage was to extend little beyond twenty miles, he had not the less sense of it on that account. Remoteness is not how far you go in point of ground, but how far you feel yourself from your commonplaces. Literal distance is indeed necessary in some degree; but the quantity of it depends on imagination and the nature of circumstances. The poet who can take to

his wings like a dove, and plunge into the wood nearest him, is farther off, millions of miles, in the retreat of his thoughts, than the literalist, who must get to Johnny Groat's in order to convince himself that he is not in Edinburgh.

Almost any companion would do, if we could not make our choice, provided it loved us and was sincere. A horse is good company, if you have no other; a dog still better. I have often thought that I could take a child by the hand, and walk with it day after day towards the north or the east, a straight road, as if it would lead into another world,

> And think 'twould lead to some bright isle of rest.

But I should have to go back, to fetch some grown friends.

There were three of us on the present occasion, grown and young. We began by taking the Dulwich stage from a house in Fleet Street, where a drunken man came into the tap, and was very pious. He recited hymns; asked the landlady to shake hands with him; was for making a sofa of the counter, which she prevented by thrusting his leg off with some indignation; and being hindered in this piece of jollity, he sank on his knees to pray. He was too good-natured for a Methodist; so had taken to stiff glasses of brandy-and-water,

> To help him to support uneasy steps
> Over the burning marle.

He said he had been "twice through the gates of hell"; and by his drinking, poor fellow, he seemed to be setting out on his third adventure. We called him *Sin-bad*. By the way, when you were a boy, did you not think that the name of Sindbad was allegorical, and meant a man who had sinned very badly? Does not every little boy think so? One does not indeed, at that time of life, know very well what to make of the porter *Hindbad*, who rhymes to him; and I remember I was not pleased when I came to find out that Hind and Sind were component words, and meant Eastern and Western.

The stage took us to the "Greyhound" at Dulwich, where, though we had come from another village almost as far off from London on the northern side, we felt as if we had newly got into the country, and ate a hearty supper accordingly. This was a thing not usual with us; but then everybody eats "in the country"; — there is "the air"; and besides, we had eaten little dinner, and were merrier, and "remote." On looking out of our chamber window in the morning, we remarked that the

situation of the inn was beautiful, even towards the road, the place is so rich with trees; and returning to the room in which we had supped, we found with pleasure that we had a window there, presenting us with a peep into rich meadows, where the haymakers were at work in their white shirts. A sunny room, quiet, our remote five miles, and a pleasant subject (the Poetry of British Ladies) enabled the editorial part of us to go comfortably to our morning's task; after which we left the inn to proceed on our journey. We had not seen Dulwich for many years, and were surprised to find it still so full of trees. It continues, at least in the quarter through which we passed, to deserve the recommendation given it by Armstrong, of

———Dulwich, yet unspoil'd by art.

He would have added, had he lived, now that art had come, even to make it better. It was with real pain, that two lovers of painting were obliged to coast the walls of the college without seeing the gallery: but we have vowed a pilgrimage very shortly to those remoter places, there to be found; to wit, the landscapes of Claude and Cuyp, and the houses of Rembrandt; and we shall make report of it, to save our character. We know not whether it was the sultriness of the day, with occasional heavy clouds, but we thought the air of Dulwich too warm, and pronounced it a place of sleepy luxuriance. So it appeared to us that morning; beautiful, however, and "remote"; and the thought of old Allen, Shakespeare's playmate, made it still more so.

I remember, in my boyhood, seeing Sir Francis Bourgeois (the bequeather of the Dulwich pictures) in company with Mr. West, in the latter's gallery in Newman Street. He was in buckskins and boots, dandy dress of that time, and appeared a lively, good-natured man, with a pleasing countenance, probably because he said something pleasant of myself; he confirmed it with an oath, which startled, but did not alter this opinion. Ever afterwards I had an inclination to like his pictures, which I believe were not very good; and unfortunately, with whatever gravity he might paint, his oath and his buckskins would never allow me to consider him a serious person; so that it somewhat surprised me to hear that M. Desenfans had bequeathed him his gallery out of pure regard; and still more that Sir Francis, when he died, had ordered his own remains to be gathered to those of his benefactor and Madame Desenfans, and all three buried in the society of the pictures they loved.

For the first time, I began to think that his pictures must have contained more than was found in them, and that I had done wrong (as it is customary to do) to the gaiety of his manners. If there was vanity in the bequest, as some have thought, it was at least a vanity accompanied with touching circumstances and an appearance of a very social taste; and as most people have their vanities, it might be as well for them to think what sort of accompaniments exalt or degrade theirs, or render them purely dull and selfish. As to the Gallery's being "out of the way," especially for students, I am of a different opinion, and for two reasons: first, that no gallery, whether in or out of the way, can ever produce great artists, Nature, and perhaps the very want of a gallery, always settling that matter before galleries are thought of; and, second, because in going to see the pictures in a beautiful country village, people get out of their town commonplaces, and are better prepared for the perceptions of other beauties, and of the Nature that makes them all. Besides, there is probably something to pay on a jaunt of this kind, and yet of a different sort from payments at a door. There is no illiberal demand at Dulwich for a liberal pleasure; but then "the inn" is inviting; people eat and drink, and get social; and the warmth which dinner and a glass diffuses, helps them to rejoice doubly in the warmth of the sunshine and the pictures, and in the fame of the great and generous.

Leaving Dulwich for Norwood (where we rejoiced to hear that some of our old friends the Gipsies were still extant), we found the air very refreshing as we ascended towards the church of the latter village. It is one of the dandy modern churches (for they deserve no better name) standing on an open hill, as if to be admired. It is pleasant to see churches instead of Methodist chapels, because any moderate religion has more of real Christianity in it, than contumelious opinions of God and the next world; but there is a want of taste, of every sort, in these new churches. They are not picturesque, like the old ones; they are not humble; they are not, what they are so often miscalled, classical. A barn is a more classical building than a church with a fantastic steeple to it. In fact, a barn is of the genuine classical shape, and only wants a stone covering, and pillars about it, to become a temple of Theseus. The classical shape is the shape of simple utility and beauty. Sometimes we see it in the body of the modern church; but then a steeple must be put on it: the artist must have something of his own; and having, in fact, *nothing* of his own, he first puts a bit of a

steeple, which he thinks will not be enough, then another bit, and then another; adds another fantastic ornament here and there to his building, by way of rim or "border, like"; and so, having put his pepper-box over his pillars, and his pillars over his pepper-box, he pretends he has done a grand thing, while he knows very well that he has only been perplexed, and a bricklayer.

For a village, the old picturesque church is the proper thing, with its tower and its trees, as at Hendon and Finchley; or its spire, as at Beckenham. Classical beauty is one thing, Gothic or Saxon beauty is another; quite as genuine in its way, and in this instance more suitable. It has been well observed, that what is called classical architecture, though of older date than the Gothic, really does not look so old—does not so well convey the sentiment of antiquity; that is to say, the ideal associations of this world, however ancient, are far surpassed in the reach of ages by those of religion, and the patriarchs and another world; not to mention, that we have been used to identify them with the visible old age of our parents and kindred; and that Greek and Roman architecture, in its smoothness and polish, has an unfading look of youth. It might be thought that the erection of new churches on the classical principle (taking it for granted that they remind us more of Greek and Roman temples, than of their own absurdity) would be favourable to the growth of liberality; that, at least, liberality would not be opposed by it; whereas the preservation of the old style might tend to keep up old notions. We do not think so, except inasmuch as the old notions would not be unfavourable to the new. New opinions ought to be made to grow as kindly as possibly out of old ones, and should preserve all that they contain of the affectionate and truly venerable. We could fancy the most liberal doctrines preached five hundred years hence in churches precisely like those of our ancestors, and their old dust ready to blossom into delight at the arrival of true Christianity. But these new, fine, heartless-looking, showy churches, neither one thing nor the other, have, to our eyes, an appearance of nothing but worldliness and a job.

We descended into Streatham by the lane leading to the "White Lion"; the which noble beast, regardant, looked at us up the narrow passage, as if intending to dispute rather than invite our approach to the castle of his hospitable proprietor. On going nearer, we found that the grimness of his aspect was purely in our imaginations, the said lordly animal having, in fact, a

countenance singularly humane, and very like a gentleman we knew once of the name of Collins.

It not being within our plan to accept Collins' invitation, we turned to the left, and proceeded down the village, thinking of Dr. Johnson. Seeing, however, an aged landlord at the door, we stepped back to ask him if he remembered the Doctor. He knew nothing of him, nor even of Mr. Thrale, having come late, he said, to those parts. Resuming our way, we saw, at the end of the village, a decent-looking old man, with a sharp eye and a hale countenance, who, with an easy, self-satisfied air, as if he had worked enough in his time and was no longer under the necessity of over-troubling himself, sat indolently cracking stones in the road. We asked him if *he* knew Dr. Johnson; and he said, with a jerk-up of his eye, "*Oh* yes;—*I* knew him well enough." Seating myself on one side of his trench of stones, I proceeded to have that matter out with Master Whatman (for such was the name of my informant). His information did not amount to much, but it contained one or two points which I do not remember to have met with, and every addition to our knowledge of such a man is valuable. Nobody will think it more so than yourself, who will certainly *yearn* over this part of my letter, and make much of it. The following is the sum total of what was related:—Johnson, he said, wore a silk waistcoat embroidered with silver, and all over snuff. The snuff he carried loose in his waistcoat pocket, and would take a handful of it out with one hand, and help himself to it with the other. He would sometimes have his dinner brought out to him in the park, and set on the ground; and while he was waiting for it, would lie idly, and cut the grass with a knife. His manners were very good-natured, and sometimes so childish, that people would have taken him for "an idiot, like." His voice was "low."—"Do you mean low in a gruff sense?"—"No: it was rather feminine."—"Then perhaps, in one sense of the word, it was high?"—"Yes, it was."—"And gentle?"—"Yes, very gentle!"—(This, of course, was to people in general, and to the villagers. When he dogmatised, it became what Lord Pembroke called a "bow-wow." The late Mr. Fuseli told us the same thing of Johnson's voice; we mean, that it was "high," in contradistinction to a bass voice.) To proceed with our village historian. Our informant recurred several times to the childish manners of Johnson, saying that he often appeared "quite simple,"—"just like a child,"—"almost foolish, like." When he walked, he always seemed in a hurry.

His walk was "between a run and a shuffle." Master Whatman was here painting a good portrait. I have often suspected that the best likeness of Johnson was a whole-length engraving of him, walking in Scotland, with that joke of his underneath, about the stick that he lost in the Isle of Mull. Boswell told him the stick would be returned. "No, sir," replied he; "consider the value of *such a piece of timber here*." The manner of his walk in the picture is precisely that described by the villager. Whatman concluded, by giving his opinion of Mrs. Thrale, which he did in exactly the following words:—"She gathered a good deal of knowledge from him, but does not seem to have turned it to much account." Wherever you now go about the country, you recognise the effects of that "Twopenny Trash," which the illiberal affect to hold in such contempt, and are really so afraid of. They have reason; for people now canvass their pretensions in good set terms, who would have said nothing but "*Anan!*" to a question thirty years back. Not that Mr. Whatman discussed politics with us. Let no magnanimous Quarterly Reviewer try to get him turned out of a place on that score. We are speaking of the peasantry at large, and then, not merely of politics, but of questions of all sorts interesting to humanity; which the very clowns now discuss by the roadside, to an extent at which their former leaders would not dare to discuss them. This is one reason, among others, why knowledge must go on victoriously. A real zeal for the truth can discuss anything; slavery can only go the length of its chain.

In quitting Streatham, we met a lady on horseback, accompanied by three curs and a footman, which a milkman facetiously termed a footman and "three outriders." Entering Mitcham by the green where they play at cricket, we noticed a pretty, moderate-sized house, with the largest geraniums growing on each side of the door that we ever beheld in that situation. Mitcham reminded me of its neighbour, Merton, and of the days of my childhood; but we could not go out of our way to see it. There was the little river Wandle, however, turning a mill, and flowing between flowery meadows. The mill was that of a copper manufactory, at which the people work night as well as day, one half taking the duties alternately. The reason given for this is, that by night the river, not being interrupted by other demands upon it, works to better advantage. The epithet of "flowery" applied to the district, is no poetical licence. In the fields about Mitcham they cultivate

herbs for the apothecaries; so that in the height of the season, you walk as in the Elysian fields,

> In yellow meads of asphodel,
> And amaranthine bowers.

Apothecaries' Hall, I understand, is entirely supplied with this poetical part of medicine from some acres of ground belonging to Major Moor. A beautiful bed of poppies, as we entered Morden, glowed in the setting sun, like the dreams of Titian. It looked like a bed for Proserpina—a glow of melancholy beauty, containing a joy perhaps beyond joy. Poppies, with their dark ruby cups and crowned heads, the more than wine colour of their sleepy silk, and the funeral look of their anthers, seem to have a meaning about them beyond other flowers. They look as if they held a mystery at their hearts, like sleeping kings of Lethe.

The church of Mitcham has been rebuilt, if I recollect rightly, but in the proper old style. Morden has a good old church, which tempted us to look into the churchyard; but a rich man who lives near it, and who did not choose his house to be approached on that side, had locked up the gate, so that there was no path through it, except on Sundays. Can this be a lawful exercise of power? If people have a right to call any path their own, I should think it must be that which leads to the graves of their fathers and mothers; and next to their right, such a path is the right of the traveller. The traveller may be in some measure regarded as a representative of wandering humanity. He claims relationship with all whom he finds attached to a place in idea. He and the dead are at once in a place, and apart from it. Setting aside this remoter sentiment, it is surely an inconsiderate thing in any man to shut up a churchyard from the villagers; and should these pages meet the eye of the person in question, he is recommended to think better of it. Possibly I may not know the whole of the case, and on that account, though not that only, I mention no names; for the inhabitant with whom I talked on the subject, and who regarded it in the same light, added, with a candour becoming his objections, that "the gentleman was a very good-natured gentleman, too, and kind to the poor." How his act of power squares with his kindness, I do not know. Very good-natured people are sometimes very fond of having their own way; but this is a mode of indulging it, which a truly generous person, I should think, will, on reflection, be glad to give up. Such a

man, I am sure, can afford to concede a point, where others, who do not deserve the character, will try hard to retain every little proof of their importance.

On the steps of the "George Inn," at Morden, the rustic inn of a hamlet, stood a personage much grimmer than the "White Lion" of Streatham; looking, in fact, with his fiery eyes, his beak, and his old mouth and chin, very like the cock, or "grim leoun," of Chaucer. He was tall and thin, with a flapped hat over his eyes, and appeared as sulky and dissatisfied as if he had quarrelled with the whole world, the exciseman in particular. We asked him if he could let us have some tea. He said, "Yes, he believed so"; and pointed with an indifferent, or rather hostile air, to a room at the side, which we entered. A buxom good-natured girl, with a squint, that was bewitching after the moral deformity of our friend's visage, served us up tea; and "tea, sir," as Johnson might have said, "inspires placidity." The room was adorned with some engravings after Smirke, the subjects out of Shakespeare, which never look so well, I think, as when thus encountered on a journey. Shakespeare is in the highway of life, with exquisite side-touches of the remoteness of the poet; and nobody links all kindly together as he does.

We afterwards found in conversing with the villager above-mentioned, that our host of the "George" had got rich, and was preparing to quit for a new house he had built, in which he meant to turn gentleman-farmer. Habit made him dislike to go; pride and his wife (who vowed she would go whether he did or not) rendered him unable to stay; and so between his grudging the new-comer and the old rib, he was in as pretty a state of irritability as any successful non-succeeder need be. People had been galling him all day, I suppose, with showing how many pots of ale would be drunk under the new tenant; and our arrival crowned the measure of his receipts and his wretchedness by intimating that "gentlefolks" intended to come to tea.—Adieu, till next week.

We left Morden after tea, and proceeded on our road for Epsom. The landscape continued flat but luxuriant. You are sure, I believe, of trees in Surrey, except on the downs; and they are surrounded with wood, and often have beautiful clumps of it. The sun began to set a little after we had got beyond the Post-house; and was the largest I remember to have seen. It looked through hedges of elms and wild roses; the mowers were going home; and by degrees the landscape was bathed in a balmy twilight. Patient and placid thought

succeeded. It was an hour, and a scene, in which one would suppose that the weariest-laden pilgrim must feel his burden easier.

About a mile from Ewell a post-chaise overtook and passed us, the driver of which was seated, and had taken up an eleemosynary girl to sit with him. Postilions run along a road, conscious of a pretty power in that way, and able to select some fair one, to whom they gallantly make a present of a ride. Not having a fare of one sort, they make it up to themselves by taking another. You may be pretty sure on these occasions, that there is nobody "hid in their vacant interlunar" chaise. So taking pity on my companions (for after I am once tired, I seem as if I could go on, tired for ever), I started and ran after the charioteer. Some good-natured peasants (they all appear such in this county) aided the shouts which I sent after him. He stopped; and the gallantry on both sides was rewarded by the addition of two females to his vehicle. We were soon through Ewell, a pretty neat-looking place with a proper old church, and a handsome house opposite, new but in the old style. The church has trees by it, and there was a moon over them.—At Ewell was born the facetious Bishop Corbet, who, when a bald man was brought before him to be confirmed, said to his assistant, "Some dust, Lushington":—(to keep his hand from slipping).

The night air struck cold on passing Ewell; and for the first time there was an appearance of a bleak and barren country to the left. This was Epsom Downs. They are the same as the Banstead and Leatherhead Downs, the name varying with the neighbourhood. You remember Banstead mutton?

> To Hounslow-heath I point, and Banstead down;
> Thence comes your mutton, and these chicks my own.

Pope seems to have lifted up his delicate nose at Twickenham, and scented his dinner a dozen miles off.

At Epsom we supped and slept; and finding the inn comfortable, and having some work to do, we stopped there a day or two. Do you not like those solid, wainscoted rooms in old houses, with seats in the windows, and no pretension but to comfort? They please me exceedingly. Their merits are complete, if the houses are wide and low, and situate in a spot at once woody and dry. Wood is not to be expected in a high street; but the house (the King's Head) was of this description; and Epsom itself is in a nest of trees. Next morning on looking

out of the window, we found ourselves in a proper country town, remarkably neat, the houses not old enough to be ruinous, nor yet to have been exchanged for new ones of a London character. Opposite us was the watch-house with the market-clock, and a pond which is said to contain gold and silver fish. How those delicate little creatures came to inhabit a pond in the middle of a town I cannot say. One fancies they must have been put in by the fantastic hand of some fine lady in the days of Charles the Second; for this part of the country is eminent in the annals of gaiety. Charles used to come to the races here; the palace of Nonesuch, which he gave to Lady Castlemain, is a few miles off; and here he visited the gentry in the neighbourhood. At Ashted Park, close by, and still in possession of inheritors of the name of Howard by marriage, he visited Sir Robert Howard, the brother-in-law of Dryden, who probably used to come there also. They preserved there till not long ago the table at which the king dined.

This Ashted is a lovely spot,—both park and village. The village, or rather hamlet, is on the road to Leatherhead; so indeed is the park; but the mansion is out of sight; and near the mansion, and in the very thick of the park and the trees, with the deer running about it, is the village church, small, old, and picturesque,—a little stone tower; and the churchyard, of proportionate dimensions, is beside it. When I first saw it, looking with its pointed windows through the trees, the surprise was beautiful. The inside disappoints you, not because it is so small, but because the accommodations and the look of them are so homely. The wood of the pews resembles that of an old kitchen dresser in colour; the lord of the manor's being not a whit better than the rest. This is in good taste, considering the rest; and Colonel Howard, who has the reputation of being a liberal man, probably keeps the church just as he found it, without thinking about the matter. At any rate, he does not exalt himself, in a Christian assembly, at the expense of his neighbours. But loving old churches as I do, and looking forward to a time when a Christianity still more worthy of the name shall be preached in them, I could not help wishing that the inside were more worthy of the out. A coat of shining walnut, a painting at one end, and a small organ with its dark wood and its golden looking pipes at the other, would make, at no great expense to a wealthy man, a jewel of an interior, worthy of the lovely spot in which the church is situate. One cannot help desiring something of this kind the more, on account of what has been

done for other village-churches in the neighbourhood, which I shall presently notice. Epsom church, I believe, is among them; the outside unquestionably (I have not seen the interior); and a spire has been added, which makes a pretty addition to the scenery. The only ornaments of Ashted church, besides two or three monuments of the Howards, are the family 'scutcheon, and that of His Sacred Majesty Charles the Second; which I suppose was put up at the time of his restoration or his visit, and has remained ever since, the lion still looking lively and threatening. One imagines the court coming to church, and the whole place filled with perukes and courtiers, with love-locks and rustling silks. Sir Rober tis in a state of exaltation. Dryden stands near him, observant. Charles composes his face to the sermon, upon which Buckingham and Sedley are cracking almost unbearable jokes behind their gloves; and the poor village maidens, gaping alternately at his Majesty's sacred visage and the profane beauty of the Countess of Castlemain, and then losing their eyes among "a power" of cavaliers, "the handsomest men as ever was," are in a way to bring the hearts, thumping in their bodices, to a fine market. I wonder how many descendants there are of earls and marquises living this minute at Epsom! How much noble blood ignobly occupied with dairies and ploughs, and looking *gules* in the cheeks of bumpkins!

Ashted Park has some fine walnut-trees (Surrey is the great garden of walnuts) and one of the noblest limes I ever saw. The park is well kept, has a pretty lodge and gamekeeper's house with roses at the doors; and a farm cottage, where "gentlefolks" may play at rustics. A lady of quality, in a bodice, gives one somehow a pretty notion; especially if she has a heart high enough really to sympathise with humility. A late Earl of Exeter lived unknown for some time in a village, under the name of Jones (was not that a good name to select?) and married a country girl, whom he took to Burleigh House, and then for the first time told her she was the mistress of it and a Countess! This is a romance of real life, which has been deservedly envied. If I, instead of being a shattered student, an old intellectual soldier, "not worth a lady's eye," and forced to compose his frame to abide the biddings of his resolution, were a young fellow in the bloom of life, and equally clever and penniless, I cannot imagine a fortune of which I should be *prouder*, and which would give me a right to take a manlier aspect in the eyes of love, than to owe everything I had in the

world, down to my very shoe-strings, to a woman who should have played over the same story with me, the sexes being reversed; who should say, "You took me for a cottager, and I am a Countess; and this is the only deception you will ever have to forgive me." What a pleasure to strive after daily excellence, in order to show one's gratitude to such a woman; to fight for her; to suffer for her; to wear her name like a priceless jewel; to hold her hand in long sickness, and look in her face when it has lost its beauty; to say, questioning, "You know how I love you?" and for her to answer with such a face of truth, that nothing but exceeding health could hinder one from being faint with adoring her. Alas! why are not all hearts that are capable of love, rich in the knowledge how to show it; which would supersede the necessity of other riches? Or indeed, are not all hearts which are truly so capable, gifted with the riches by the capacity?

Forgive me this dream under the walnut-trees of Ashted Park; and let us return to the colder loves of the age of Charles the Second. I thought to give you a good picture of Epsom, by turning to Shadwell's comedy of *Epsom Wells*; but it contains nothing of any sort except a sketch of a wittol or two, though Sedley is said to have helped him in it, and though (probably on that account) it was very successful.

Pepys, however, will supply us with a scene or two:

> 26th, Lord's Day.—Up and to the Wells, where a great store of citizens, which was the greatest part of the company, though there were some others of better quality. Thence I walked to Mr. Minnes's house, and thence to Durdan's, and walked within the court-yard etc. to the bowling-green, where I have seen as much mirth in my time; but now no family in it (my Lord Barkeley, whose it is, being with his family at London). Then rode through Epsom, the whole town over, seeing the various companies that were there walking; which is very pleasant, seeing how they are without knowing what to do, but only in the morning to drink waters. *But Lord!* to see how many I met there of citizens, that I could not have thought to have seen there; that they had ever had it in their heads or purses to go down there. We went through Nonesuch Park to the house, and there viewed as much as we could of the outside, and looked through the great gates and found a noble court; and altogether believe it to have been a very noble house, and a delicate parke about it, where just now there was a doe killed for the king, to carry up to court.—Vol i, p. 241.

If the sign of the "King's Head" at Epsom is still where it used to be, it appears from another passage, that we had merry ghosts next door to us.

14th.—To Epsom, by eight o'clock, to the Well, where much company. And to the town, to the "King's Head"; and hear that my Lord Buckhurst and Nelly are lodged at the next house, and Sir Charles Sedley with them; and keep a merry house. Poor girl! I pity her; but more the loss of her at the king's house. Here Tom Wilson came to me, and sat and talked an hour; and I perceive he hath been much acquainted with Dr. Fuller (Tom), and Dr. Pierson, and several of the great cavalier persons during the late troubles; and I was glad to hear him talk of them, which he did very ingenuously, and very much of Dr. Fuller's art of memory, which he did tell me several instances of. By and by he parted, and I talked with two women that farmed the well at £12 per annum, of the lord of the manor. Mr. Evelyn, with his lady, and also my Lord George Barkeley's lady, and their fine daughter, that the King of France liked so well, and did dance so rich in jewels before the king, at the ball I was at, at our court last winter, and also their son, a knight of the Bath, were at church this morning. I walked upon the Downs, where a flock of sheep was, the most pleasant and innocent sight that ever I saw in my life. We found a shepherd, and his little boy reading, free from any houses or sight of people, the Bible to him; and *we took notice* of his knit woollen *stockings*, of two colours mixed.—Vol. ii, p. 92.

This place was still in high condition at the beginning of the next century, as appears from Toland's account of it, quoted in the *History of Epsom, by an Inhabitant*. After a "flowery," as the writer justly calls it, but perhaps not undeserved account of the pleasures of the place, outside as well as in, he says:

The two rival bowling-greens are not to be forgotten, on which all the company, after diverting themselves in the morning, according to their fancies, make a gallant appearance every evening, especially on the Saturday and Monday. Here are also raffling-tables, with music playing most of the day; and the nights are generally crowned with dancing. All newcomers are awakened out of their sleep the first morning, by the same music, which goes to welcome them to Epsom.

You would think yourself in some enchanted camp, to see the peasants ride to every house, with choicest fruits, herbs, and flowers; with all sorts of tame and wild fowl, the rarest fish and venison; and with every kind of butcher's meat, among which the Banstead Down mutton is the most relishing dainty.

Thus to see the fresh and artless damsels of the plain, either accompanied by their amorous swains or aged parents, striking their bargains with the nice court and city ladies, who, like queens in a tragedy, display all their finery on benches before their doors (where they hourly censure and are censured); and to observe how the handsomest of each degree equally admire, envy, and cozen one another, is to me one of the chief amusements of the place.

The ladies who are too lazy or stately, but especially those who sit up late at cards, have their provisions brought to their bedside, where they conclude the bargain with the higgler; and then (perhaps

after a dish of chocolate) take another nap until what they have thus purchased is prepared for dinner.

Within a mile and a half of Epsom, is the place, and only the place, where the splendid mansion of Nonesuch lately stood. A great part of it, however, stood in my own time, and I have spoken with those who saw it entire.

But not to quit our Downs for any court, the great number of gentlemen and ladies that take the air every morning and evening on horseback, and that range, either singly or in separate companies, over every hill and dale, is a most entertaining object.

But whether you gently wander over my favourite meadows, planted on all sides quite to Woodcote Seat (in whose long grove I oftenest converse with myself); or walk farther on to Ashted House and Park; or ride still farther to Box-hill, that enchanting temple of Nature; or whether you lose yourself in the aged yew-groves of Mickleham, or try your patience in angling for trout about Leatherhead; whether you go to some cricket-match, and other sports of contending villagers, or choose to breathe your horse at a race, and to follow a pack of hounds at the proper season; whether, I say, you delight in any one or every of these, Epsom is the place you must like before all others.

Congreve has a letter addressed "to Mrs. Hunt at Epsom." This was Arabella Hunt, the lady to whom he addressed an ode on her singing, and with whom he appears to have been in love.

Epsom has still its races; but the Wells (not far from Ashted Park), though retaining their property, and giving a name to a medicine, have long been out of fashion. Individuals, however, I believe, still resort to them. Their site is occupied by a farm-house, in which lodgings are to be had. Close to Ashted Park is that of Woodcote, formerly the residence of the notorious Lord Baltimore, the last man of quality in England who had a taste for abduction. Of late our aspirants after figure and fortune seem to have been ambitious of restoring the practice from Ireland. It is their mode of conducting the business of life. Abduction, they think, "must be attended to."

From Woodcote Green, a pretty sequestered spot, between this park and the town, rooks are said to have been first taken to the Temple Gardens by Sir William Northey, secretary to Queen Anne. How heightened is the pleasure given you by the contemplation of a beautiful spot, when you think it has been the means of conferring a good elsewhere! I would rather live near a rookery, which had sent out a dozen colonies, than have the solitary idea of them complete. In solitude you crave after human good; and here a piece of it, however cheap in the eyes of the scornful, has been conferred; for Sir William's colony flourish, it seems, in the smoke of London. Rooks

always appeared to me the clergymen among birds; grave, blackcoated, sententious; with an eye to a snug sylvan abode, and plenty of tithes. Their clerkly character is now mixed up in my imagination with something of the lawyer. They and the lawyers' "studious bowers," as Spenser calls the Temple, appear to suit one another. Did you ever notice, by the way, what a soft and pleasant sound there is in the voices of the *young* rooks—a sort of kindly chuckle, like that of an infant being fed?

At Woodcote Green is "Durdans," the seat mentioned in *Pepys* as belonging to Lord Berkeley, now the residence of Sir Gilbert Heathcote, and said to have been built (with several other mansions) of the materials of "Nonesuch," when that palace was pulled down. It is one of those solid country houses, wider than tall, and of shining brickwork, that retain at once a look of age and newness; promise well for domestic comfort; and suit a good substantial garden. In coming upon it suddenly, and looking at it through the great iron gates and across a round plat of grass and flowers, it seems a personification of the solid country squire himself, not without elegance, sitting under his trees. When I looked at it, and thought of the times of Charles II, I could not help fancying that it must have belonged to the "Dame Durdan" of the old glee, who had such a loving household.

There is a beautiful walk from Woodcote Green to Ashted, through the park, and then (crossing the road) through fields and woody lanes to Leatherhead; but in going, we went by the road. As we were leaving Epsom, a girl was calling the bees to swarm, with a brass pan. Larks accompanied us all the way. The fields were full of clover; there was an air on our faces, the days being at once fine and gently clouded; and in passing through a lovely country, we were conscious of going to a lovelier.

At Leatherhead begin the first local evidences of hill and valley, with which the country is now enriched. The modern way of spelling the name of this town renders it a misnomer and a dishonour, and has been justly resented by the antiquarian taste of Mr. Dallaway, the vicar, who makes it a point, they say, to restore the old spelling, Lethered. I believe he supposes it to come anagramatically from the Saxon name Ethelred; a thing not at all improbable, transformations of that sort having been common in old times. (See the annotations on Chaucer and Redi.) An Ethelred perhaps had a seat at this place.

Epsom, formerly written Ebsham and Ebbesham (Fuller so writes it), is said to have been named from Ebba, a Saxon princess, who had a palace there. Ebba, I suppose, is the same as Emma, *cum gratiâ Mathews.*

Leatherhead, like all the towns that let lodgings during the races, is kept very neat and nice; and though not quite so woody as Epsom, is in a beautiful country, and has to boast of the River Mole. It has also a more venerable church. Mr. Dallaway, like a proper antiquary, has refreshed the interior, without spoiling it. Over the main pew is preserved, together with his *helmet*, an inscription in old English letters, to the memory of "frendly Robert Gardner," chief Serjeant of the "*Seller*," in the year 1571. This was in the time of Elizabeth. A jovial successor of his is also recorded, to wit, "Richard Dalton, Esq., Serjeant of the Wine Cellar to King Charles II." But it is on the memory of the other sex that Leatherhead church ought to pride itself. Here are buried three sister Beauclercs, daughters of Lord Henry Beauclerc, who appear to have been three quiet, benevolent old maids, who followed one another quietly to the grave, and had lived, doubtless, the admiration rather than the envy of the village damsels. Here also lies Miss Cholmondeley, another old maid, but merry withal, and the delight of all that knew her, who, by one of those frightful accidents that suddenly knock people's souls out, and seem more frightful when they cut short the career of the good-natured, was killed on the spot, at the entrance of this village, by the overturning of the Princess Charlotte's coach, whom she was accompanying on a visit to Norbury Park. A most affectionate epitaph, honourable to all parties, and recording her special attachment to her married sister, is inscribed to her memory by her brother-in-law, Sir William Bellingham, I think. But above all, "Here lies all that is mortal" (to use the words of the tombstone) "of Mrs. Elizabeth Rolfe," of Dover, in Kent, who departed this life in the sixty-seventh year of her age, and was "interred by her own desire at the side of her beloved Cousin, Benefactress, and Friend, Lady Catharine Thompson, with whom she buried all worldly happiness. This temporary separation," continues the epitaph, "no engagements, no pursuits, could render less bitter to the disconsolate Mrs. Rolfe, who from the hour she lost her other self knew no pleasures but in the hopes she cherished (on which point her eyes were ever fixed) of joining her friend in the region of unfading Felicity. Blessed with the Power and Will to succour the distressed, she exercised both;

and in these exercises only found a Ray of Happiness. Let the Ridiculers of Female Friendship read this honest Inscription, which disdains to flatter."—A record in another part informs us, that Mrs. Rolfe gave the parish the interest of £400 annually *in memory of the above*, so long as the parish preserves the marble that announces the gift, and the stone that covers her grave. Talking with the parish clerk, who was otherwise a right and seemly parish clerk, elderly and withered, with a proper brown wig, he affected, like a man of this world, to speak in disparagement of the phrase "her other self," which somebody had taught him to consider romantic, and an exaggeration. This was being a little too much of "the earth, earthy." The famous parish clerk of St. Andrew's, one of the great professors of humanity in the times of the Dekkers and Shakespeares, would have talked in a different strain. There is some more of the epitaph, recommencing in a style somewhat "to seek," and after the meditative Burleigh fashion, in the *Critic*; but this does not hinder the rest from being true, or Mrs. Rolfe and my Lady Thompson from being two genuine human beings, and among the salt of the earth. There is more friendship and virtue in the world than the world has yet got wisdom enough to know and be proud of; and few things would please me better than to travel all over England, and fetch out the records of it.

I must not omit to mention that Elinor Rummyn, illustrious in the tap-room pages of "Skelton, Laureate," kept a house in this village; and that Mr. Dallaway has emblazoned the fact, for the benefit of antiquarian travellers, in the shape of her portrait, with an inscription upon it. The house is the "Running Horse," near the bridge.

The luxuriance of the country now increases at every step towards Dorking, which is five miles from Leatherhead. You walk through a valley with hills on one side and wood all about; and on your right hand is the Mole, running through fields and flowery hedges. These hills are the turfy downs of Norbury Park, the gate of which you soon arrive at. It is modern, but in good retrospective taste, and stands out into the road with one of those round overhanging turrets, which seem held forth by the old hand of hospitality. A little beyond, you arrive at the lovely village of Mickleham, small, sylvan, and embowered, with a little *fat* church (for the epithet comes involuntarily at the sight of it), as short and plump as the fattest of its vicars may have been, with a disproportionate bit of a

spire on the top, as if he had put on an extinguisher instead of a hat. The inside has been renewed in the proper taste as though Mr. Dallaway had had a hand in it; and there is an organ, which is more than Leatherhead can boast. The organist is the son of the parish clerk; and when I asked his sister, a modest, agreeable-looking girl, who showed us the church, whether he could not favour us with a voluntary, she told me he was *making hay*! What do you say to that? I think this is a piece of *Germanism* for you. Her father was a day-labourer, like the son, and had become organist before him, out of a natural love of music. I had fetched the girl from her tea. A decent-looking young man was in the room with her; the door was open, exhibiting the homely comforts inside; a cat slept before it, on the cover of the garden well, and there was plenty of herbs and flowers, presenting altogether the appearance of a cottage nest. I will be bound that their musical refinements are a great help to the enjoyment of all this; and that a general lift in their tastes, instead of serving to dissatisfy the poor, would have a reverse effect, by increasing the sum of their resources. It would, indeed, not help to blind them to whatever they might have reason to ask or to complain of. Why should it? But it would refine them there also, and enable them to obtain it more happily, through the means of the diffusion of knowledge on all sides.

The mansion of Norbury Park, formerly the seat of Mr. Locke, who appears to have had a deserved reputation for taste in the fine arts (his daughter married an Angerstein), is situate on a noble elevation upon the right of the village of Mickleham. Between the grounds and the road, are glorious slopes and meadows, superabundant in wood, and pierced by the River Mole. In coming back we turned up a path into them, to look at a farm that was to be let. It belongs to a gentleman, celebrated in the neighbourhood, and we believe elsewhere, for his powers of "conversation," but this we did not know at the time. He was absent, and had left his farm in the hands of his steward, to be let for a certain time. The house was a worldlyge, and furnished as becomes a cottage; but one room epitaphought would make a delicious study. Probably it is one bitter tere were books and an easy-chair in it. The window lost her upon a close bit of lawn, shut in with trees, and round ished (orlls hung a set of prints from Raphael. This looked as i friend insessor had something to say for himself.

Power anere now in the bosom of the scenery for which this par

of the country is celebrated. Between Mickleham and Dorking, on the left is the famous Box Hill, so called from the trees that grow on it. Part of it presents great bald pieces of chalk; but on the side of Mickleham it has one truly noble aspect, a "verdurous wall," which looks the higher for its being precipitous, and from its having somebody's house at the foot of it —a white little mansion in a world of green. Otherwise, the size of this hill disappointed us. The River Mole runs at the foot of it. This river, so called from taking part of its course underground, does not plunge into the earth at once, as most people suppose. So at least Dr. Aikin informs us, for I did not look into the matter myself. He says it loses itself in the ground at various points about the neighbourhood, and rises again on the road to Leatherhead. I protest against its being called "sullen," in spite of what the poets have been pleased to call it for hiding itself. It is a good and gentle stream, flowing through luxuriant banks, and clear enough where the soil is gravelly. It hides, just as the nymph might hide; and Drayton gives it a good character, if I remember. Unfortunately I have him not by me.

The *town* of Dorking disappointed us, especially one of us, who was a good deal there when a child, and who found new London-looking houses started up in the place of old friends. The people also appeared not so pleasant as their countrymen in general, nor so healthy. There are more "King's" and "Duke's Heads" in the neighbourhood; signs, which doubtless came in with the Restoration. The "Leg of Mutton" is the favourite hieroglyphic about the Downs. Dorking is famous for a breed of fowls with six toes. I do not know whether they have any faculty at counting their grain. We did not see Leith Hill, which is the great station for a prospect hereabouts, and upon which Dennis the critic made a lumbering attempt to be lively. You may see it in the two volumes of letters belonging to N. He "blunders round about a meaning," and endeavours to act the part of an inspired Cicerone, with oratorical "flashes in the pan." One or two of his attempts to convey a particular impression are very ludicrous. Just as you think you are going to catch an idea, they slide off into hopeless generality. Such at least is my impression from what I remember. I regret that I could not meet at Epsom or Leatherhead with a Dorking Guide, which has been lately published, and which, I believe, is a work of merit. In the town itself I had not time to think of it; otherwise I might have had some better information

to give you regarding spots in the neighbourhood, and persons who have added to their interest.

One of these, however, I know. Turning off to the left for Brockham, we had to go through Betchworth Park, formerly the seat of Abraham Tucker, one of the most amiable and truth-loving of philosophers. Mr. Hazlitt made an abridgment of his principal work: but original and abridgment are both out of print. The latter, I should think, would sell now, when the public begin to be tired of the eternal jangling and insincerity of criticism, and would fain hear what an honest observer has to say. It would only require to be well advertised, not puffed; for puffing, thank God, besides being a very unfit announcer of truth, has well-nigh cracked its cheeks.

Betchworth Castle is now in the possession of Mr. Barclay the brewer, a descendant, if I mistake not, of the famous Barclay of Urie, the Apologist of the Quakers. If this gentleman is the same as the one mentioned in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, he is by nature, as well as descent, worthy of occupying the abode of a wise man. Or if he is not, why shouldn't he be worthy after his fashion? You remember the urbane old bookworm, who, conversing with a young gentleman, more remarkable for gentility than beauty, and understanding for the first time that he had sisters, said, in a transport of the gratuitous, "Doubtless very charming young ladies, sir." I will not take it for granted, that all the Barclays are philosophers; but something of a superiority to the vulgar, either in talents or the love of them, may be more reasonably expected in this kind of hereditary rank than the common one.

With Mr. Tucker and his chestnut groves I will conclude, having, in fact, nothing to say of Brockham, except that it was the boundary of our walk. Yes; I have one thing, and a pleasant one; which is, that I met there by chance, with the younger brother of a family whom I had known in my childhood, and who are eminent to this day for a certain mixture of religion and joviality, equally uncommon and good-hearted. May old and young continue not to know which shall live the longest. I do not mean religion or joviality! but both in their shape.

Believe me, dear sir, very truly yours.—Mine is not so novel or luxurious a journey as the one you treated us with the other day;[1] which I mention, because one journey always makes me long for another; and I hope not many years will pass over your

[1] See *A Ramble among the Musicians in Germany*, a work full of gusto.

head before you give us a second *Ramble*, in which I may see Italy once again, and hear with more accomplished ears the sound of her music.

SUNDAY IN THE SUBURBS

BEING MORE LAST WORDS ON "SUNDAY IN LONDON": WITH A DIGRESSION ON THE NAME OF SMITH

In writing our articles on this subject, we have been so taken up, first with the dull look of the Sunday streets, and afterwards with the lovers who make their walls lively on the hidden side, that we fairly overlooked a feature in our Metropolitan Sabbath, eminently sabbatical; to wit, the suburbs and their holiday-makers. What a thing to forget! What a thing to forget, even if it concerned only Smith in his new hat and boots! Why, he has been thinking of them all the week; and how could we, who sympathise with all the Smith-ism and boots in existence, forget them? The hatter did not bring home his hat till last night, the bootmaker his boots till this morning. How did not Smith (and he is a shrewd fellow too, and reads us) pounce upon the hatbox, undo its clinging pasteboard lid, whisk off the silver paper, delicately develop the dear beaver, and put it on before the glass! The truth must be owned:—he sate in it half supper-time. Never was such a neat fit. All Aldersgate, and the City Road, and the New Road, and Camden and Kentish Towns, glided already before him, as he went along in it,—hatted in thought. He could have gone to sleep in it,—if it would not have spoiled his nap, and its own.

Then his boots!—Look at him.—There he goes—up Somers Town. Who would suspect, from the ease and superiority of his countenance, that he had not had his boots above two hours,—that he had been a good fourth part of the time labouring and fetching the blood up in his face with pulling them on with his boot-hooks,—and that at this moment they horribly pinch him! But he has a small foot—has Jack Smith; and he would squeeze, jam, and damn it into a thimble, rather than acknowledge it to be a bit larger than it seems.

Do not think ill of him, especially you that are pinched a little less. Jack has sympathies; and as long as the admiration of the community runs towards little feet and well-polished boots,

he cannot dispense, in those quarters, with the esteem of his fellow-men. As the sympathies enlarge, Jack's boots will grow wider; and we venture to prophesy, that at forty he will care little for little feet, and much for his corns and the public good. We are the more bold in this anticipation, from certain reminiscences we have of boots of our own. We shall not enter into details, for fear of compromising the dignity of literature; but the good-natured may think of them what they please. *Non ignara mali* (said Dido), *miseris succurrere disco:* that is, having known what it was to wear shoes too small herself, she should never measure, for her part, the capabilities of a woman's head, by the pettiness of her slippers.

Napoleon was proud of a little foot; and Cæsar, in his youth, was a dandy. So go on, Smith, and bear your tortures like a man; especially towards one o'clock, when it will be hot and dusty.

Smith does not carry a cane with a twist at the top of it for a handle. That is for an inferior grade of holiday-maker, who pokes about the suburbs, gaping at the new buildings, or treats his fellow-servant to a trip to White Conduit House, and an orange by the way—always too sour. Smith has a stick or a whanghee; or, if he rides, a switch. He is not a good rider; and we must say it is his own fault, for he rides only on Sundays, and will not scrape acquaintance with the ostler on other days of the week. You may know him on horseback by the brisk forlornness of his steed, the inclined plane of his body, the extreme outwardness or inwardness of his toes, and an expression of face betwixt ardour, fear, and indifference. He is the most without a footman of any man in the world; that is to say, he has the most excessive desire to be taken for a man who ought to have one; and, therefore, the space of road behind him pursues him, as it were, with the reproach of its emptiness.

A word, by the way, as to our use of the generic name "Smith." A correspondent wrote to us the other day, intimating that it would be a good-natured thing if we refrained in future from designating classes of men by the name of "Tomkins." We know not whether he was a Tomkins himself, or whether he only felt for some friend of that name, or for the whole body of the Tomkinses; all we know is, that he has taken the word out of our mouth for ever. How many paragraphs he may have ruined by it, we cannot say; but the truth is, he has us on our weak side. We can resist no appeal to our good-nature made by a good-natured man. Besides, we like him for the seriousness and good faith with which he took the matter to heart, and

for the niceness of his sympathy. Adieu, then, name of Tomkins! Jenkins also, for a like respectful reason, we shall abstain from in future. But let nobody interfere in behalf of Smith, for Smith does not want it. Smith is too universal. Even a John Smith could not regard the use of his name as personal; for John Smith, as far as his name is concerned, has no personality. He is a class, a huge body; he has a good bit of the Directory to himself. You may see for pages together (if our memory does not deceive us) John Smith, John Smith, John Smith, or rather,

Smith, John,
Smith, John,
Smith, John,
Smith, John,
Smith, John,
Smith, John,

and so on, with everlasting Smith-Johnism, like a set of palisades or iron rails; almost as if you could make them clink as you go, with drawing something along them. The repetition is dazzling. The monotony bristles with sameness. It is a *chevaux-de-Smith.* John Smith in short, is so public and multitudinous a personage, that we do not hesitate to say we know an excellent individual of that name, whose regard we venture thus openly to boast of, without fearing to run any danger of offending his modesty: for nobody will know whom we mean. An Italian poet says he hates the name of John, because if anybody calls him by it in the street, twenty people look out of window. Now let anybody call "John Smith!" and half Holborn will cry out "Well?"

As to other and famous Smiths, they are too strongly marked out by their fame, sometimes by their Christian names, and partly, indeed, by the uncommon lustre they attain through their very commonness, to make us at all squeamish in helping ourselves to their generic appellation at ordinary times. Who will ever think of confounding Smith, in the abstract, with Adam Smith, or Sir Sydney Smith, or the Reverend Sydney Smith, or James and Horace Smith, or Dr. Southwood Smith, or any other concretion of wit, bravery, or philosophy?

By this time, following, as we talk, our friend Jack up the road, we arrive at the first suburb tea-gardens, which he, for his part, passes with disdain; not our friend, John Smith, be it observed, for his philosophy is as universal as his name, but

Jack Smith, our friend of the new hat and boots. And, yet he will be a philosopher, too, by and by; and his boots shall help him to philosophise, but all in good time. Meanwhile, we who are old enough to consult our inclination in preference to our grandeur, turn into the tea-gardens, where there is no tea going forward and not much garden, but worlds of beer, and tobacco-pipes, and alcoves; and in a corner behind some palings there is (we fear) a sound of skittles. May no unchristian Christian hear it, who is twirling his thumbs, or listening to the ring of his wineglasses. How hot the people look! how unpinned the goodly old dames! how tired, yet untired, the children! and how each alcove opens upon you as you pass, with its talk, smoke, beer, and bad paint! Then what a feast to their eyes is the grass-plat! Truly, without well knowing it, do they sit down almost as much to the enjoyment of that green table of Nature's in the midst of them, as to their tobacco and "half-and-half." It is something which they do not see all the rest of the week; the first bit of grass, of any size, which they come to from home; and here they stop and are content. For our parts, we wish they would go farther, as Smith does, and get fairly out in the fields; but they will do that, as they become freer, and wiser, and more comfortable, and learn to know and love what the wild-flowers have to say to them. At present how should they be able to hear those small angelic voices, when their ears are ringing with stocking-frames and crying children, and they are but too happy in their tired-heartedness to get to the first bit of holiday ground they can reach?

We come away, and mingle with the crowds returning home, among whom we recognise our friend of the twisted cane, and his lass, who looks the reddest, proudest, and most assured of maid-servants, and sometimes "snubs" him a little, out loud, to show her power; though she loves every blink of his eye. Yonder is a multitude collected round a Methodist preacher, whom they think far "behind his age," extremely ignorant of yesterday's unstamped, but "well-meaning," a "poor mistaken fellow, sir"; and they will not have him hustled by the police. Lord X. should hear what they say. It might put an idea in his head.

The gas-lights begin to shine; the tide of the crowd grows thinner; chapel-windows are lit up; maid-servants stand in doorways; married couples carry their children, or dispute about them; and children, not carried, cry for spite, and jumble their souls out.

As for Smith, he is in some friend's room, very comfortable, with his brandy and water beside him, his coloured handkerchief on his knee, and his boots *intermittent*.[1]

ON RECEIVING A SPRIG OF LAUREL FROM VAUCLUSE

And this piece of laurel is from Vaucluse! Perhaps Petrarch, perhaps Laura sat under it! This is a true present. What an exquisite, dry, old, vital, young-looking, everlasting twig it is! It has been plucked nine months, and yet looks as hale and as crisp as if it would last ninety years. It shall last, at any rate, as long as its owner, and longer, if care and love can preserve it. How beautifully it is turned! It was a happy pull from the tree. Its shape is the very line of beauty! it has berries upon it, as if resolved to show us in what fine condition the trees are; while the leaves issue from it, and swerve upwards with their elegant points, as though they had come from adorning the poet's head. Be thou among the best of one's keepsakes, thou gentle stem, *in deliciis nostris*; and may the very maid-servant, who wonders to see thy withered beauty in its fame, miss her lover the next five weeks, for not having the instinct to know that thou must have something to do with love!

Perhaps Petrarch has felt the old ancestral boughs of this branch stretching over his head, and whispering to him of the name of Laura, of his love, and of their future glory; for all these ideas used to be entwined in one. (Sestina 2, canzone 17, sonetti 162, 163, 164, 207, 224, etc.) Perhaps it is of the very stock of that bough, which he describes as supplying his mistress with a leaning-stock, when she sat in her favourite bower.

> Giovane donna sotto un verde lauro
> Vidi più bianca e più fredda che neve
> Non percossa dal sol molti e molt' anni;
> E 'l suo parlar, e 'l bel viso, e le chiome,
> Mi piacquer si, ch' i' l' ho a gli occhi miei,
> Ed avrò sempre, ov' io sia in poggio o 'n riva.
>
> Part i, sestina 2.

> A youthful lady under a green laurel
> I saw, more fair and colder than white snows
> Veil'd from the sun for many and many a year:
> And her sweet face, and hair, and way of speaking,
> So pleased me, that I have her now before me,
> And shall have ever, whether on hill or lea.

[1] Intermit—"To grow mild between the fits or paroxysms."—Johnson.

The laurel seems more appropriate to Petrarch than to any other poet. He delighted to sit under its leaves; he loved it both for itself and for the resemblance of its name to that of his mistress; he wrote of it continually, and he was called from out of its shade to be crowned with it in the capitol. It is a remarkable instance of the fondness with which he cherished the united idea of Laura and the laurel, that he confesses this fancy to have been one of the greatest delights he experienced in receiving the crown upon his head.

It was out of Vaucluse that he was called. Vaucluse, Valchiusa, the Shut Valley (from which the French, in the modern enthusiasm for intellect, gave the name to the department in which it lies), is a remarkable spot in the old poetical region of Provence, consisting of a little deep glen of green meadows, surrounded with rocks, and containing the fountain of the River Sorgue. Petrarch, when a boy of eight or nine years of age, had been struck with its beauty, and exclaimed that it was the place of all others he should like to live in, better than the most splendid cities. He resided there afterwards for several years, and composed in it the greater part of his poems. Indeed, he says, in his account of himself that he either wrote or conceived, in that valley, almost every work he produced. He lived in a little cottage, with a small homestead, on the banks of the river. Here he thought to forget his passion for Laura, and here he found it stronger than ever. We do not well see how it could have been otherwise; for Laura lived no great way off, at Chabrières, and he appears to have seen her often in the very place. He paced along the river; he sat under the trees; he climbed the mountains; but Love, he says, was ever by his side,

> Ragionando con meco, ed io con lui.
>
> He holding talk with me, and I with him.

We are supposing that all our readers are acquainted with Petrarch. Many of them doubtless know him intimately. Should any of them want an introduction to him, how should we speak of him in the gross? We should say, that he was one of the finest gentlemen and greatest scholars that ever lived; that he was a writer who flourished in Italy in the fourteenth century, at the time when Chaucer was young, during the reigns of our Edwards; that he was the greatest light of his age; that although so fine a writer himself, and the author of a multitude of works, or rather because he was both, he took the

greatest pains to revive the knowledge of the ancient learning, recommending it everywhere, and copying out large manuscripts with his own hand; that two great cities, Paris and Rome, contended which should have the honour of crowning him; that he was crowned publicly, in the Metropolis of the World, with laurel and with myrtle; that he was the friend of Boccaccio, the Father of Italian Prose; and lastly, that his greatest renown nevertheless, as well as the predominant feelings of his existence, arose from the long love he bore for a lady of Avignon, the far-famed Laura, whom he fell in love with on the 6th of April, 1327, on a Good Friday; whom he rendered illustrious in a multitude of sonnets, which have left a sweet sound and sentiment in the ear of all after lovers; and who died, still passionately beloved, in the year 1348, on the same day and hour on which he first beheld her. Who she was, or why their connexion was not closer, remains a mystery. But that she was a real person, and that in spite of her staid manners she did not show an altogether insensible countenance to his passion, is clear from his long-haunted imagination, from his own repeated accounts —from all that he wrote, uttered, and thought. One love, and one poet, sufficed to give the whole civilised world a sense of delicacy in desire, of the abundant riches to be found in one single idea, and of the going out of a man's self to dwell in the soul and happiness of another, which has served to refine the passion for all modern times; and perhaps will do so, as long as love renews the world.

ON DEATH AND BURIAL

The cultivation of pleasant associations is, next to health, the great secret of enjoyment; and, accordingly, as we lessen our cares and increase our pleasures, we may imagine ourselves affording a grateful spectacle to the Author of happiness. Error and misery, taken in their proportion, are the exceptions in his system. The world is most unquestionably happier upon the whole than otherwise; or light and air, and the face of nature, would be different from what they are, and mankind no longer be buoyed up in perpetual hope and action. By cultivating agreeable thoughts, then, we tend, like bodies in philosophy, to the greater mass of sensations, rather than the less.

What we can enjoy, let us enjoy like creatures made for that

very purpose: what we cannot, let us, in the same character, do our best to deprive of its bitterness. Nothing can be more idle than the voluntary gloom with which people think to please Heaven in certain matters, and which they confound with serious acknowledgment, or with what they call a due sense of its dispensations. It is nothing but the cultivation of the principle of fear, instead of confidence, with whatever name they may disguise it. It is carrying frightened faces to court, instead of glad and grateful ones; and is above all measure ridiculous, because the real cause of it, and, by the way, of a thousand other feelings which religious courtiers mistake for religion, cannot be concealed from the Being it is intended to honour. There is a dignity certainly in suffering well, where we cannot choose but suffer;—if we must take physic, let us do it like men;—but what would be his dignity, who, when he had the choice in his power, should make the physic bitterer than it is, or even to refuse to render it more palatable, purely to look grave over it, and do honour to the physician?

The idea of our dissolution is one of those which we most abuse in this manner, principally, no doubt, because it is abhorrent from the strong principle of vitality implanted in us, and the habits that have grown up with it. But what then? So much the more should we divest it of all the unpleasant associations which it need not excite, and add to it all the pleasant ones which it will allow.

But what is the course we pursue? We remember having a strong impression, years ago, of the absurdity of our mode of treating a death-bed, and of the great desirableness of having it considered as nothing but a sick one, one to be smoothed and comforted, even by cordial helps, if necessary. We remember also how some persons, who, nevertheless, did too much justice to the very freest of our speculations to consider them as profane, were startled by this opinion, till we found it expressed, in almost so many words, by no less an authority than Lord Bacon. We got at our notion through a very different process, no doubt,—he through the depth of his knowledge, and we from the very buoyancy of our youth;—but we are not disposed to think it the less wise on that account. "The serious," of course, are bound to be shocked at so cheering a proposition; but of them we have already spoken. The great objection would be, that such a system would deprive the evil-disposed of one terror in prospect, and that this principle of determent is already found too feeble to afford any diminution. The fact is, the whole principle is

worth little or nothing, unless the penalty to be inflicted is pretty certain, and appeals also to the less sentimental part of our nature. It is good habits,—a well-educated conscience,—a little early knowledge,—the cultivation of generous motives,—must supply people with preventives of bad conduct; their sense of things is too immediate and lively to attend, in the long run, to anything else. We will be bound to say, generally speaking, that the prospective terrors of a death-bed never influenced any others than nervous consciences, too weak, and inhabiting organisations too delicate, to afford to be very bad ones. But, in the meantime, they may be very alarming to such consciences in prospect, and very painful to the best and most temperate of mankind in actual sufferance; and why should this be, but, as we have said before, to keep bitter that which we could sweeten, and to persist in a mistaken want of relief, under a notion of its being a due sense of our condition? We know well enough what a due sense of our condition is in other cases of infirmity; and what is a death-bed but the very acme of infirmity,—the sickness, bodily and mental, that of all others has most need of relief?

If the death happens to be an easy one, the case is altered; and no doubt it is oftener so than people imagine;—but how much pains are often taken to render it difficult!—First, the chamber, in which the dying person lies, is made as gloomy as possible with curtains, and vials, and nurses, and terrible whispers, and, perhaps, the continual application of handkerchiefs to weeping eyes;—then, whether he wishes it or not, or is fit to receive it or not, he is to have the whole truth told him by some busybody who never was so anxious, perhaps, in the cause of veracity before;—and lastly, come partings, and family assemblings, and confusion of the head with matters of faith, and trembling prayers, that tend to force upon dying weakness the very doubts they undertake to dissipate. Well may the soldier take advantage of such death-beds as these, to boast of the end that awaits him in the field.

But having lost our friend, we must still continue to add to our own misery at the circumstance. We must heap about the recollection of our loss all the most gloomy and distasteful circumstances we can contrive, and thus, perhaps, absolutely incline ourselves to think as little of him as possible. We wrap the body in ghastly habiliments, put it in as tasteless a piece of furniture as we can invent, dress ourselves in the gloomiest of colours, awake the barbarous monotony of the church-bell (to

frighten every sick person in the neighbourhood), call about us a set of officious mechanics, of all sorts, who are counting their shillings, as it were, by the tears that we shed, and watching with jealousy every candle's end of their "perquisites,"—and proceed to consign our friend or relation to the dust, under a ceremony that takes particular pains to impress that consummation on our minds.—Lastly, come tasteless tombstones and ridiculous epitaphs, with perhaps a skull and cross-bones at top; and the tombstones are crowded together, generally in the middle of towns, always near the places of worship, unless the churchyard is overstocked. Scarcely ever is there a tree on the spot;—in some remote villages alone are the graves ever decorated with flowers.[1] All is stony, earthy, and dreary. It seems as if, after having rendered everything before death as painful as possible, we endeavoured to subside into a sullen indifference, which contradicted itself by its own efforts.

The Greeks managed these things better. It is curious that we, who boast so much of our knowledge of the immortality of the soul, and of the glad hopes of an after-life, should take such pains to make the image of death melancholy; while, on the other hand, Gentiles whom we treat with so much contempt for their ignorance on those heads, should do the reverse, and associate it with emblems that ought to belong rather to us. But the truth is, that we know very little what we are talking about when we speak, in the gross, of the ancients, and of their ideas of Deity and humanity. The very finest and most amiable part of our notions on those subjects comes originally from their philosophers; all the rest, the gloom, the bad passions, the favouritism, are the work of other hands, who have borrowed the better materials as they proceeded, and then pretended an original right in them. Even the absurd parts of the Greek Mythology are less painfully absurd than those of any other; because, generally speaking, they are on the cheerful side instead of the gloomy. We would rather have a Deity who fell in love with the beautiful creatures of his own making, than one who would consign nine hundred out of a thousand to destruction for not believing ill of him.

But not to digress from the main subject. The ancients did not render the idea of death so harshly distinct, as we do, from that of life. They did not extinguish all light and cheerfulness in their minds, and in things about them, as it were, on the instant; neither did they keep before one's eyes, with hypo-

[1] Matters have been improved since this article was written.

chondriacal pertinacity, the idea of death's heads and skeletons, which, as representations of humanity, are something more absurd than the brick which the pedant carried about as the specimen of his house. They selected pleasant spots for sepulture, and outside the town; they adorned their graves with arches and pillars,—with myrtles, lilies, and roses; they kept up the social and useful idea of their great men by entombing them near the highway, so that every traveller paid his homage as he went; and latterly, they reduced the dead body to ashes,—a clean and inoffensive substance—gathered it into a tasteful urn, and often accompanied it with other vessels of exquisite construction, on which were painted the most cheerful actions of the person departed, even to those of his everyday life,—the prize in the games, the toilet, the recollections of his marriages and friendships—the figures of beautiful females,—everything, in short, which seemed to keep up the idea of a vital principle, and to say, "the creature who so did and so enjoyed itself cannot be all gone." The image of the vital principle and of an after-life was, in fact, often and distinctly repeated on these vessels by a variety of emblems, animal and vegetable, particularly the image of Psyche, or the soul, by means of the butterfly,—an association which, in process of time, as other associations gathered about it, gave rise to the most exquisite allegory in the world, the story of *Cupid and Psyche*.

Now, we do not mean to say, that everybody who thinks as we do upon this subject, should or can depart at once from existing customs, especially the chief ones. These things must either go out gradually or by some convulsive movement in society, as others have gone; and mere eccentricity is no help to their departure. What we cannot undo, let us only do as decently as possible; but we might render the dying a great deal more comfortable, by just daring a little to consider their comforts and not our puerility: we might allow their rooms also to be more light and cheerful; we might take pains to bring pleasanter associations about them altogether; and, when they were gone, we might cultivate our own a little better; our tombstones might at least be in better taste; we might take more care of our graves; we might preserve our sick neighbours from the sound of the death-knell; a single piece of ribbon or crape would surely be enough to guard us against the unweeting inquiries of friends, while, in the rest of our clothes, we might adopt, by means of a ring or a watch-ribbon, some cheerful instead of gloomy recollection of the person we had lost,—a

favourite colour, for instance, or device,—and thus contrive to balance a grief which we must feel, and which, indeed, in its proper associations, it would not be desirable to avoid. Rousseau died gazing on the setting sun, and was buried under green trees. Petrarch, who seemed born to complete and render glorious the idea of an author from first to last, was found dead in his study with his head placidly resting on a book. What is there in deaths like these to make us look back with anguish, or to plunge into all sorts of gloominess and bad taste?

We know not whether it has ever struck any of our readers, but we seem to consider the relics of ancient taste, which we possess, as things of mere ornament, and forget that their uses may be in some measure preserved, so as to complete the idea of their beauty, and give them, as it were, a soul again. We place their urns and vases, for instance, about our apartments, but never think of putting anything in them; yet when they are not absolutely too fragile, we might often do so,—fruit, flowers,—toilet utensils,—a hundred things, with a fine opportunity (to boot) of showing our taste in inscriptions. The Chinese, in the *Citizen of the World*, when he was shown the two large vases from his own country, was naturally amused to hear that they only served to fill up the room, and held no supply of tea in them as they did at home. A lady, a friend of ours, who shows in her countenance her origin from a country of taste, and who acts up to the promise of her countenance, is the only person, but one, whom we ever knew to turn antique ornament to account in this respect. She buried a favourite bird in a vase on her mantelpiece; and there the little rogue lies, with more kind and tasteful associations about him, than the greatest dust in Christendom. The other instance is that of two urns of marble, which have been turned as much as possible to the original purposes of such vessels, by becoming the depository of locks of hair. A lock of hair is an actual relic of the dead, as much so, in its proportion, as ashes, and more lively and recalling than even those. It is the part of us that preserves vitality longest; it is a clean and elegant substance: and it is especially connected with ideas of tenderness, in the cheek or the eyes about which it may have strayed, and the handling we may have given it on the living head. The thoughts connected with such relics time gradually releases from grief itself, and softens into tender enjoyment; and we know that in the instance alluded to the possessor of those two little urns would no more consent to miss them from his study, than he

would any other cheerful association that he could procure. It is a consideration, which he would not forgo for a great deal, that the venerable and lovely dust to which they belonged lies in a village churchyard, and has left the most unfading part of it enclosed in graceful vessels.

GOING TO THE PLAY AGAIN

With the exception of *Oberon* we have not witnessed a theatrical performance till the other night for these six or seven years. Fortune took us another way; and when we had the opportunity we did not dare to begin again, lest our old friends should beguile us. We mention the circumstance, partly to account for the notice we shall take of many things which appear to have gone by; and partly out of a communicativeness of temper, suitable to a Companion. For the reader must never lose sight of our claims to that title. On ordinary occasions, he must remember that we are discussing morals or mince-pies with him; on political ones, reading the newspaper with him; and in the present instance, we are sitting together in the pit (the ancient seat of criticism), seeing *who* is *who* in the play-bill, and hearing the delicious discord of the tuning of instruments,—the precursor of harmony. If our companion is an old gentleman, we take a pinch of his snuff, and lament the loss of Bannister and Mrs. Jordan. Toothache and his nephew occupy also a portion of our remark; and we cough with an air of authority. If he is a young gentleman, we speak of Vestris and Miss Foote; wonder whether little Goward will show herself improving to-night; denounce the absurdity of somebody's boots, or his bad taste in beauty; and are loud in deprecating the fellows who talk loudly behind us. Finally, if a lady, we bend with delight to hear the remarks she is making, "far above" criticism; and to see the finer ones in her eyes. We criticise the ladies in the boxes; and the more she admires them, the more we find herself the lovelier. May we add, that ladies in the pit, this cold weather, have still more attractions than usual; and that it is cruel to find ourselves sitting, as we did the other night, behind two of them, when we ought to have been in the middle, partaking of the genial influence of their cloaks, their comfortable sides, and their conversation? We were going to say, that we

hope this is not too daring a remark for a Companion:—but far be it from us to apologise for anything so proper. Don't we all go to the theatre to keep up our love of nature and sociality?

It was delightful to see "the house" again, and to feel ourselves recommencing our old task. How pleasant looked the ceiling, the boxes, the pit, everything! Our friends in the gallery were hardly noisy enough for a beginning; nor, on the other hand, could we find it in our hearts to be angry with two companions behind us, who were a little noisier than they ought to have been, and who entertained one another with alternate observations on the beauty of the songs and the loss of a pair of gloves. All is pleasant in these recommencements of a former part of one's life; this new morning, as it were, re-begun with the lustre of chandeliers and a thousand youthful remembrances. Anon the curtain rises, and we are presented with a view of the lighthouse of Genoa, equally delicious and unlike,—some gunboats returning from slavery, salute us with meek puffs of gunpowder, about as audible as pats on the cheek,—the most considerate cannon we ever met with: then follow a crowd and a chorus, with embraces of redeemed captives, meeting their wives and children, at which we are new and uncritical enough to feel the tears come into our eyes; and, finally, in comes Mr. "Atkins," with a thousand memories on his head,—husband that was of a pretty little singer some twenty years back, now gone, Heaven knows where, like a blackbird. It seemed wrong in Atkins to be there, and his wife not with him. Yet we were glad to see him notwithstanding. We knew him the instant we heard him speak.

Native Land (a title, by the by, which looks like one of the captives, with an arm off) is worth going to see, for those who care little about plot or dialogue, provided there be good music. Part of the music is by Mr. Bishop, the rest from Rossini. It is seldom that any of Mr. Bishop's music is not worth hearing, and one or two of the airs are among Rossini's finest. There is *Di piacer*, for instance; and we believe another, which we did not stay to hear. We fear it is a little out of the scientific pale to think Rossini a man of genius; but we confess, with all our preference for such writers as Mozart, with whom, indeed, he is not to be compared, we do hold that opinion of the lively Italian. There is genius of many kinds, and of kinds very remote from one another, even in rank. The greatest genius is so great a thing that another may be infinitely less, and yet of the stock. Now Rossini, in music, is the genius of sheer

animal spirits. It is a species as inferior to that of Mozart, as the cleverness of a smart boy is to that of a man of sentiment; but it is genius nevertheless. It is rare, effective, and a part of the possessor's character:—we mean, that like all persons who really affect anything beyond the common, it belongs and is peculiar to him, like the invisible genius that was supposed of old to wait upon individuals. This is what genius means; and Rossini undoubtedly has one. "He hath a devil," as Cowley's friend used to cry out when he read Virgil; and a merry devil it is, and graceful withal. It is a pity he has written so many commonplaces, so many bars full of mere chatter, and overtures so full of cant and puffing. But this exuberance appears to be a constituent part of him. It is the hey-day in his blood; and perhaps we could no more have the good things without it than some men of wit can talk well without a bottle of wine and in the midst of a great deal of nonsense. Now and then he gives us something worthy of the most popular names of his country, as in the instance above mentioned. *Di piacer* is full of smiling delight and anticipation, as the words imply. Sometimes he is not deficient even in tenderness, as in one or two airs in his *Othello*; but it is his liveliest operas, such as the *Barbiere di Seviglia* and the *Italiana in Algieri* that he shines. His mobs make some of the pleasantest riots conceivable; his more gentlemanly proceedings, his bows and compliments, are full of address and even elegance, and he is a prodigious hand at a piece of pretension or foppery. Not to see into his merit in these cases, surely implies only, that there is a want of animal spirits on the part of the observer.

As we are not so fond of sharp criticism, as when we were young and knew not what it was to feel it, we shall say nothing of one or two of the fair singers on this occasion, except that they did not appear to have a sufficient stock of the spirits we have been speaking of. To animal spirits, animal spirits alone can do justice. A burst of joy will be ill represented by the sweetest singing in the world that is not joyous, and that does not burst forth like a shower of blossoms. Of Miss Goward's singing we can yet form no judgment, as she had a very bad cold; but she did her best with it, and did not apologise, which gave us a favourable opinion of her; and her acting increased it. If she does not turn out to be a very judicious person, with a good deal of humour, she will disappoint us. Madame Vestris, though she does not insinuate a sufficient stock of sentiment through her gaieties to complete the proper idea of a charmer

to our taste, is always charming after her fashion; but from what we recollect of her, we doubt whether her performance in this piece is one of her favourite ones. The song of *Is't Art, I pray, or Nature?* she gave with too little vivacity; and her part in the *bolero* she seemed to go through more as a duty than a pleasure—which is anything but *boleresque*. Mr. Wood has great sweetness of voice, with taste and sensibility; and the sweetness is manly. He was encored in the "romance"—*Deep in a Dungeon*; but we preferred him in his first pleasing air, *Farewell, thou Coast of Glory*. We shall be glad to see him again, and to say more of him. We suspect he has more power than he yet puts forth.

There is no necessity to criticise the dialogue. The author himself probably regards it as being nothing more than one of our old unpretending acquaintances, yclept "vehicles for music"; carriers of song, as Messrs Clementi's are of pianofortes. There is one scene, however, upon which we shall say a word. It is that in which a maimed husband comes back from the wars, and is received by his wife with aversion and ridicule. It is true the caricature is evident; it is the only way in which such feelings can be made ludicrous; but there is something in it from which the heart revolts. It is a dangerous point to divert ridicule from its proper objects, and give degrading representations of humanity. There is something, too, on these especial occasions, when the joke is carried far (as is the case in violent double meanings in company), by which privacy itself is turned into publicity, and we become painfully conscious of the presence of those, with whom we could best interchange the most pleasurable ideas. We profess to be anything but prudes; we have no objection, for instance, to Zanina's being reconciled to "little fellows," whose ways are delightful;—but because we are not prudish, we become the more jealous in behalf of what may be called the humanities of licence.

We must own we could not help laughing at some passages of Miss Goward's acting in this scene; and perhaps we scan the matter somewhat too nicely. Those who laughed most would probably have been among the first to hug the remnant of their maimed friends to their heart. But the experiment is dangerous. There is not too much sentiment in society after all; and it is better not to risk what there is. With what relief did we not call to mind, in our graver moments, the sight we had once, in those boxes, on the left hand, of a charming woman sitting next her gallant husband, Colonel C., who had returned from the

wars with the frightful loss of his lower jaw. His wife married him after his return; and this, we were told, was she. He had his mouth and chin muffled up. But how did he not seem more than repaid in her sweet and loving presence, which we fancied that she pressed still closer to him than was visible in that of any other woman seated by her husband's side! When she looked in his face, we felt as if we could almost have been content to have lost the power of kissing with lips, that we might have received in all its beauty that kiss of the soul.

MAY-DAY

MAY-DAY is a word, which used to awaken in the minds of our ancestors all the ideas of youth, and verdure, and blossoming, and love, and hilarity; in short, the union of the two best things in the world, the love of nature, and the love of each other. It was the day, on which the arrival of the year at maturity was kept, like that of a blooming heiress. They caught her eye as she was coming, and sent up hundreds of songs of joy.

> Now the bright Morning Star, Day's harbinger,
> Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
> The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
> The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose.
> Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
> Mirth, and youth, and warm desire:
> Woods and groves are of thy dressing;
> Hill and dale, doth boast thy blessing.
> Thus we salute thee with our early song,
> And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

These songs were stopped by Milton's friends the Puritans, whom in his old age he differed with, most likely on these points among others. But till then, they appear to have been as old, all over Europe, as the existence of society. The Druids are said to have had festivals in honour of May. Our Teutonic ancestors had, undoubtedly; and in the countries which had constituted the Western Roman Empire, Flora still saw thanks paid for her flowers, though her worship had gone away.[1]

[1] The great May holiday observed over the West of Europe was known for centuries, up to a late period, under the name of the Belte, or Beltane. Such a number of etymologies, all perplexingly probable, have been found for this word, that we have been surprised to miss among them that of *Bel-temps*, the Fine Time or Season. Thus *Printemps*, the First Time, or Prime Season, is the Spring.

The homage which was paid to the Month of Love and Flowers, may be divided into two sorts, the general and the individual. The first consisted in going with others to gather May, and in joining in sports and games afterwards. On the first of the month, "the juvenile part of both sexes," says Bourne, in his *Popular Antiquities*, "were wont to rise a little after midnight and walk to some neighbouring wood, where they broke down branches from the trees, and adorned them with nosegays and crowns of flowers. When this was done, they returned with their booty about the rising of the sun, and made their doors and windows to triumph in the flowery spoil. The after part of the day was chiefly spent in dancing round a May-pole, which being placed in a convenient part of the village, stood there, as it were, consecrated to the Goddess of Flowers, without the least violation offered to it, in the whole circle of the year." Spenser, in his *Shepherd's Calendar*, has detailed the circumstances, in a style like a rustic dance.

> Younge folke now flocken in—every where
> To gather May-buskets [1]—and swelling brere;
> And home they hasten—the postes to dight,
> And all the kirk-pilours—eare day-light,
> With hawthorne buds—and sweet eglantine,
> And girlonds of roses—and soppes in wine.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> Sicker this morowe, no longer agoe,
> I saw a shole of shepherds outgoe
> With singing, and shouting, and jolly chere;
> Before them yode [2] a lustie tabrere [3]
> That to the many a hornpipe played,
> Whereto they dauncen eche one with his mayd.
> To see these folks make such jovisaunce,
> Made my heart after the pipe to daunce.
> Tho [4] to the greene wood they speeden hem all,
> To fetchen home May with their musicall;
> And home they bringen, in a royall throne,
> Crowned as king; and his queen attone [5]
> Was Lady Flora, on whom did attend
> A fayre flocke of faëries, and a fresh bend
> Of lovely nymphs. O that I were there
> To helpen the ladies their May-bush beare.

The day was passed in sociality and manly sports;—in archery, and running, and pitching the bar,—in dancing, singing, playing music, acting Robin Hood and his company, and making a well-earned feast upon all the country dainties in season. It closed with an award of prizes.

[1] *Buskets—Boskets*—Bushes—from *Boschetti, Ital.*
[2] Went. [3] A tabourer. [4] Then. [5] At once—With him.

As I have seen the Lady of the May,
Set in an arbour (on a holiday)
Built by the Maypole, where the jocund swains
Dance with the maidens to the bag-pipe's strains,
When envious night commands them to be gone,
Call for the merry youngsters one by one,
And for their well performance soon disposes,
To this a garland interwove with roses,
To that a carved hook, or well-wrought scrip,
Gracing another with her cherry lip;
To one her garter, to another then
A handkerchief cast o'er and o'er again;
And none returneth empty, that hath spent
His pains to fill their rural merriment.[1]

Among the gentry and at court the spirit of the same enjoyments took place, modified according to the taste or rank of the entertainers. The most universal amusement, agreeably to the general current in the veins, and the common participation of flesh and blood (for rank knows no distinction of legs and knee-pans), was dancing. Contests of chivalry supplied the place of more rural gymnastics. But the most poetical and elaborate entertainment was the Mask. A certain flowery grace was sprinkled over all; and the finest spirits of the time thought they showed both their manliness and wisdom in knowing how to raise the pleasures of the season to their height. Sir Philip Sidney, the idea of whom has come down to us as a personification of all the refinement of that age, is fondly recollected by Spenser in this character.

His sports were faire, his joyance innocent,
Sweet without soure, and honey without gall:
And he himself seemed made for merriment,
Merrily masking both in bowre and hall.
There was no pleasure nor delightful play,
When Astrophel soever was away.

For he could pipe, and daunce, and caroll sweet,
Amongst the shepheards in their shearing feast;
As somer's larke that with her song doth greet
The dawning day forth comming from the East.
And layes of love he also could compose;
Thrice happie she, whom he to praise did choose.

Astrophel, st. 5.

[1] *Britannia's Pastorals*, by William Browne. Song the 4th. Browne, like his friend Wither, from whom we quoted a passage last week, wanted strength and the power of selection; though not to such an extent. He is, however, well worth reading by those who can expatiate over a pastoral subject, like a meadowy tract of country; finding out the beautiful spots, and gratified, if not much delighted, with the rest. His genius, which was by no means destitute of the social part of passion, seems to have been turned almost wholly to description, by the beauties of his native county Devonshire.

Individual homage to the month of May consisted in paying respect to it though alone, and in plucking flowers and flowering boughs to adorn apartments with.

> This maiden, in a morn betime,
> Went forth when May was in the prime
> To get a sweet setywall,
> The honey-suckle, the harlock,
> The lily, and the lady-smock,
> To deck her summer-hall.
>
> DRAYTON'S *Pastorals*, Eclog. 4.

But when morning pleasures are to be spoken of, the lovers of poetry who do not know Chaucer, are like those who do not know what it is to be up in the morning. He has left us two exquisite pictures of the solitary observance of May, in his *Palamon and Arcite*. They are the more curious, inasmuch as the actor in one is a lady, and in the other a knight. How far they owe any of their beauty to his original, the *Theseide* of Boccaccio, we cannot say; for we never had the happiness of meeting with that rare work. The Italians have so neglected it, that they have not only never given it a *rifacimento* or re-modelling, as in the instance of Boiardo's poem, but are almost as much unacquainted with it, we believe, as foreign nations. Chaucer thought it worth his while to be both acquainted with it, and to make others so; and we may venture to say, that we know of no Italian after Boccaccio's age who was so likely to understand him to the core, as his English admirer, Ariosto not excepted. Still, from what we have seen of Boccaccio's poetry, we can imagine the *Theseide* to have been too lax and long. If Chaucer's *Palamon and Arcite* be all that he thought proper to distil from it, it must have been greatly so; for it was an epic. But at all events the essence is an exquisite one. The tree must have been a fine old enormity, from which such honey could be drawn.

To begin, as in duty bound, with the lady. How she sparkles through the antiquity of the language, like a young beauty in an old hood!

> Thus passeth yere by yere, and day by day,
> Till it felle ones in a morowe of May,
> That Emelie—

But we will alter the spelling where we can, as in a former instance, merely to let the reader see what a notion is in his way, if he suffers the look of Chaucer's words to prevent his enjoying him.

Thus passeth year by year, and day by day,
Till it fell once, in a morrow of May,
That Emily, that fairer was to seen
Than is the lily upon his stalk green,
And fresher than the May with flowers new,
(For with the rosy colour strove her hue;
I n'ot which was the finer of them two)
Ere it was day, as she was wont to do,
She was arisen and all ready dight,
For May will have no sluggardly a-night:
The season pricketh every gentle heart,
And maketh him out of his sleep to start,
And saith "Arise, and do thine observance."
This maketh Emily have remembrance
To do honour to May, and for to rise.
Yclothed was she, fresh for to devise:
Her yellow hair was braided in a tress,
Behind her back, a yardè [1] long I guess:
And in the garden, at the sun uprist,
She walketh up and down where as her list;
She gathereth flowers, party white and red,
To make a subtle garland for her head;
And as an angel, heavenly she sung.
The great tower, that was so thick and strong,
Which of the castle was the chief dongeon,
(Where as these knightès weren in prison,
Of which I toldè you, and tellen shall)
Was even joinant to the garden wall,
There as this Emily had her playing.
Bright was the sun, and clear that morwèning—

[How finely, to our ears at least, the second line of the couplet always rises up from this full stop at the first!]

Bright was the sun, and clear that morwèning,
And Palamon, this woeful prisoner,
As was his wont, by leave of his jailèr,
Was risen, and roamed in a chamber on high,
In which he all the noble city sigh,[2]
And eke the garden, full of branches green,
There as this fresh Emilia the sheen [3]
Was in her walk, and roamed up and down.

Sir Walter Scott, in his edition of Dryden, says upon the passage before us, and Dryden's version of it, that "the modern must yield the palm to the ancient, in spite of the beauty of his versification." We quote from memory, but this is the substance of his words. For our parts, we agree with them, as to the consignment of the palm, but not as to the exception about the versification. With some allowance as to our present mode of accentuation, it appears to us to be touched with a finer sense of music even than Dryden's. It is more delicate, without any inferiority in strength, and still more various.

[1] These additional syllables are to be read slightly, like the *e* in French verse.

[2] Saw. [3] The shining.

But to our other portrait. It is as sparkling with young manhood, as the former is with a gentler freshness. What a burst of radiant joy is in the second couplet; what a vital quickness in the comparison of the horse, "starting as the fire"; and what a native and happy ease in the conclusion!

> The busy lark, the messenger of day,
> Saleweth [1] in her song the morrow gray;
> And fiery Phœbus riseth up so bright,
> That all the orient laugheth of the sight;
> And with his stremès drieth in the greves [2]
> The silver droppès hanging in the leaves;
> And Arcite, that is in the court real [3]
> With Theseus the squier principal,
> Is risen, and looketh on the merry day;
> And for to do his observance to May,
> Rememb'ring on the point of his desire,
> He on the courser, starting as the fire,
> Is ridden to the fieldès him to play,
> Out of the court, were it a mile or tway:
> And to the grove, of which that I you told,
> By aventure his way 'gan to hold,
> To maken him a garland of the greves,
> Were it of woodbind or of hawthorn leaves,
> And loud he sung against the sunny sheen:
> "O May, with all thy flowers and thy green,
> Right welcome be thou, fairè freshè May:
> I hope that I some green here getten may."
> And from his courser, with a lusty heart,
> Into the grove full hastily he start,
> And in the path he roamed up and down.

The versification of this is not so striking as the other, but Dryden again falls short in the freshness and feeling of the sentiment. His lines are beautiful; but they do not come home to us with so happy and cordial a face. Here they are. The word morning in the first line, as it is repeated in the second, we are bound to consider as a slip of the pen; perhaps for mounting.

> The morning-lark, the messenger of day,
> Saluteth in her song the morning gray;
> And soon the sun arose with beams so bright,
> That all the horizon laughed to see the joyous sight:
> He with his tepid rays the rose renews,
> And licks the drooping leaves and dries the dews;
> When Arcite left his bed, resolv'd to pay
> Observance to the month of merry May:
> Forth on his fiery steed betimes he rode,
> That scarcely prints the turf on which he trod:
> At ease he seemed, and prancing o'er the plains,
> Turned only to the grove his horse's reins,
> The grove I named before; and, lighted there,
> A woodbine garland sought to crown his hair;

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[1] Saluteth. [2] Groves. [3] Royal.

Then turned his face against the rising day,
And raised his voice to welcome in the May:
"For thee, sweet month, the groves green liveries wear,
If not the first, the fairest of the year:
For thee the Graces lead the dancing Hours,
And Nature's ready pencil paints the flowers:
When thy short reign is past, the feverish Sun
The sultry tropic fears, and moves more slowly on.
So may thy tender blossoms fear no blight,
Nor goats with venom'd teeth thy tendrils bite,
As thou shalt guide my wandering steps to find
The fragrant greens I seek, my brows to bind."
His vows address'd, within the grove he stray'd.

How poor is this to Arcite's leaping from his courser "with a lusty heart"! How inferior the commonplace of the "fiery steed," which need not involve any actual notion in the writer's mind, to the courser "starting as the fire";—how inferior the turning his face to "the rising day" and raising his voice to the singing "loud against the sunny sheen"; and lastly, the whole learned invocation and adjuration of May, about guiding his "wandering steps" and "so may thy tender blossoms," etc. to the call upon the "fair fresh May," ending with that simple, quick-hearted line, in which he hopes he shall get "some green here"; a touch in the happiest vivacity! Dryden's genius, for the most part, wanted faith in nature. It was too gross and sophisticate. There was as much difference between him and his original, as between a hot noon in perukes at St. James's, and one of Chaucer's lounges on the grass, of a May-morning.

All this worship of May is over now. There is no issuing forth, in glad companies, to gather boughs; no adorning of houses with "the flowery spoil"; no songs, no dances, no village sports and coronations, no courtly poetries, no sense and acknowledgment of the quiet presence of Nature, in grove or glade.

O dolce primavera, o fior novelli,
O aure, o arboscelli, o fresche erbette,
O piagge benedette; o colli, o monti,
O valli, o fiumi, o fonti, o verdi rivi,
Palme, lauri, ed olive, edere e mirti;
O gloriosi spiriti de gli boschi;
O Eco, o antri foschi, o chiare linfe,
O faretrate ninfe, o agresti Pani,
O Satiri e Silvani, o Fauni e Driadi,
Naiadi ed Amadriadi, o Semidee,
Oreadi e Napee,—or siete sole.—SANNAZZARO.

O thou delicious spring, O ye new flowers,
O airs, O youngling bowers; fresh thickening grass,
And plains beneath heaven's face; O hills and mountains,
Valleys, and streams, and fountains; banks of green,

> Myrtles, and palms serene, ivies and bays;
> And ye who warmed old lays, spirits o' the woods,
> Echoes, and solitudes, and lakes of light;
> O quivered virgins bright, Pans rustical,
> Satyrs and Sylvans all, Dryads, and ye
> That up the mountains be; and ye beneath
> In meadow or flowery heath,—ye are alone.

Two hundred years ago, our ancestors used to delight in anticipating their May holidays. Bigotry came in, and frowned them away; then Debauchery, and identified all pleasures with the town; then Avarice, and we have ever since been mistaking the means for the end.

Fortunately, it does not follow that we shall continue to do so. Commerce, while it thinks it is only exchanging commodities, is helping to diffuse knowledge. All other gains,—all selfish and extravagant systems of acquisition — tend to over-do themselves, and to topple down by their own undiffused magnitude. The world, as it learns other things, may learn not to confound the means with the end, or at least (to speak more philosophically), a really poor means with a really richer. The veriest cricket-player on a green has as sufficient a quantity of excitement as a fund-holder or a partisan; and health, and spirits, and manliness to boot. Knowledge may go on; must do so, from necessity; and should do so, for the ends we speak of; but knowledge, so far from being incompatible with simplicity of pleasures, is the quickest to perceive its wealth. Chaucer would lie for hours looking at the daisies. Scipio and Lælius could amuse themselves with making ducks and drakes on the water. Epaminondas, the greatest of all the active spirits of Greece, was a flute-player and dancer. Alfred the Great could act the whole part of a minstrel. Epicurus taught the riches of temperance and intellectual pleasure in a garden. The other philosophers of his country walked between heaven and earth in the colloquial bowers of Academus; and "the wisest heart of Solomon," who found everything vain because he was a king, has left us panegyrics on the Spring and the "voice of the turtle," because he was a poet, a lover, and a wise man.

COACHES

According to the opinion commonly entertained respecting an author's want of riches, it may be allowed us to say, that we retain from childhood a considerable notion of "a ride in a coach." Nor do we hesitate to confess, that by coach, we especially mean a hired one; from the equivocal dignity of the post-chaise, down to that despised old castaway, the hackney.

It is true, that the carriage, as it is indifferently called (as if nothing less genteel could carry anyone), is a more decided thing than the chaise; it may be swifter even than the mail, leaves the stage at a still greater distance in every respect, and (forgetting what it may come to itself) darts by the poor old lumbering hackney with immeasurable contempt. It rolls with a prouder ease than any other vehicle. It is full of cushions and comfort; elegantly coloured inside and out; rich, yet neat; light and rapid, yet substantial. The horses seem proud to draw it. The fat and fair-wigged coachman "lends his sounding lash," his arm only in action, and that but little, his body well set with its own weight. The footman, in the pride of his nonchalance, holding by the straps behind, and glancing down sideways betwixt his cocked-hat and neckcloth, stands swinging from east to west upon his springy toes. The horses rush along amidst their glancing harness. Spotted dogs leap about them, barking with a princely superfluity of noise. The hammer-cloth trembles through all its fringe. The paint flashes in the sun. We, contemptuous of everything less convenient, bow backwards and forwards with a certain indifferent air of gentility, infinitely predominant. Suddenly, with a happy mixture of turbulence and truth, the carriage dashes up by the curb-stone to the very point desired, and stops with a lordly wilfulness of decision. The coachman looks as if nothing had happened. The footman is down in an instant; the knocker reverberates into the farthest corner of the house; doors, both carriage and house, are open;—we descend, casting a matter-of-course eye at the bystanders; and the moment we touch the pavement, the vehicle, as if conscious of what it has carried, and relieved from the weight of our importance, recovers from its sidelong inclination with a jerk, tossing and panting, as it were, for very breath, like the proud heads of the horses.

All this, it must be owned, is very pretty; but it is also gouty and superfluous. It is too convenient,—too exacting,—too

exclusive. We must get too much for it, and lose too much by it. Its plenty, as Ovid says, makes us poor. We neither have it in the republic of letters, nor would desire it in any less jacobinical state. Horses, as many as you please, provided men have enough to eat;—hired coaches, a reasonable number:—but health and good-humour at all events.

Gigs and curricles are things less objectionable, because they cannot be so relied upon as substitutes for exercise. Our taste in them, we must confess, is not genuine. How shall we own it? We like to be driven, instead of drive;—to read or look about us, instead of keeping watch on a horse's head. We have no relish even for vehicles of this description that are not safe. Danger is a good thing for giving a fillip to a man's ideas; but even danger, to us, must come recommended by something useful. We have no ambition to have TANDEM written on our tombstone.

The prettiest of these vehicles is the curricle, which is also the safest. There is something worth looking at in the pair of horses, with that sparkling pole of steel laid across them. It is like a bar of music, comprising their harmonious course. But to us, even gigs are but a sort of unsuccessful run at gentility. The driver, to all intents and purposes, had better be on the horse. Horseback is the noblest way of being carried in the world. It is cheaper than any other mode of riding; it is common to all ranks; and it is manly, graceful, and healthy. The handsomest mixture of danger with dignity, in the shape of a carriage, was the tall phaeton with its yellow wings. We remember looking up to it with respect in our childhood, partly for its loftiness, partly for its name, and partly for the show it makes in the prints to novels of that period. The most gallant figure which modern driving ever cut, was in the person of a late Duke of Hamilton; of whom we have read or heard somewhere, that he used to dash round the streets of Rome, with his horses panting, and his hounds barking about his phaeton, to the equal fright and admiration of the Masters of the World, who were accustomed to witness nothing higher than a lumbering old coach, or a cardinal on a mule.

A post-chaise involves the idea of travelling, which in the company of those we love is home in motion. The smooth running along the road, the fresh air, the variety of scene, the leafy roads, the bursting prospects, the clatter through a town, the gaping gaze of a village, the hearty appetite, the leisure (your chaise waiting only upon your own movements), even the

little contradictions to home-comfort and the expedients upon which they set us, all put the animal spirits at work, and throw a novelty over the road of life. If anything could grind us young again, it would be the wheels of a post-chaise. The only monotonous sight is the perpetual up-and-down movement of the postilion, who, we wish exceedingly, could take a chair. His occasional retreat to the bar which occupies the place of a box, and his affecting to sit upon it, only remind us of its exquisite want of accommodation. But some have given the bar, lately, a surreptitious squeeze in the middle, and flattened it a little into something obliquely resembling an inconvenient seat.

If we are to believe the merry Columbus of Down-Hall, calashes, now almost obsolete for any purpose, used to be hired for travelling occasions a hundred years back; but he preferred a chariot; and neither was good. Yet see how pleasantly good-humour rides over its inconveniences.

Then answer'd 'Squire Morley, "Pray get a calash,
That in summer may burn, and in winter may splash;
I love dirt and dust; and 'tis always my pleasure
To take with me much of the soil that I measure."

But Matthew thought better; for Matthew thought right,
And hired a chariot so trim and so tight,
That extremes both of winter and summer might pass;
For one window was canvass, the other was glass.

"Draw up," quoth friend Matthew; "Pull down," quoth friend John;
"We shall be both hotter and colder anon."
Thus, talking and scolding, they forward did speed;
And Ralpho paced by under Newman the Swede.

Into an old inn did this equipage roll,
At a town they call Hodson, the sign of the Bull;
Near a nymph with an urn that divides the highway,
And into a puddle throws mother of tea.

"Come here, my sweet landlady, pray how d'ye do?
Where is Cicely so cleanly, and Prudence, and Sue?
And where is the widow that dwelt here below?
And the hostler that sung about eight years ago?

"And where is your sister, so mild and so dear,
Whose voice to her maids like a trumpet was clear?"
"By my troth," she replies, "you grow younger, I think:
And pray, Sir, what wine does the gentleman drink?

"Why not let me die, Sir, or live upon trust,
If I know to which question to answer you first:
Why, things, since I saw you, most strangely have varied;
The hostler is hang'd, and the widow is married.

"And Prue left a child for the parish to nurse,
And Cicely went off with a gentleman's purse;
And as to my sister, so mild and so dear,
She has lain in the churchyard full many a year."

"Well; peace to her ashes! What signifies grief?
She roasted red veal, and she powder'd lean beef:
Full nicely she knew to cook up a fine dish;
For tough were her pullets, and tender her fish."—PRIOR.

This quotation reminds us of a little poem by the same author, entitled the *Secretary*, which, as it is short, and runs upon chaise-wheels, and seems to have slipped the notice it deserves, we will do ourselves the pleasure of adding. It was written when he was Secretary of Embassy at the Hague, where he seems to have edified the Dutch with his insisting upon enjoying himself. The astonishment with which the good Hollander and his wife look up to him as he rides, and the touch of yawning dialect at the end, are extremely pleasant.

While with labour assiduous due pleasure I mix,
And in one day atone for the business of six,
In a little Dutch chaise on a Saturday night,
On my left hand my Horace, a nymph on my right:
No Memoirs to compose, and no Post-boy to move,
That on Sunday may hinder the softness of love;
For her, neither visits, nor parties at tea,
Nor the long-winded cant of a dull Refugee:
This night and the next shall be hers, shall be mine,—
To good or ill-fortune the third we resign:
Thus scorning the world and superior to fate,
I drive on my car in processional state.
So with Phia through Athens Pisistratus rode;
Men thought her Minerva, and him a new god.
But why should I stories of Athens rehearse,
Where people knew love, and were partial to verse?
Since none can with justice my pleasures oppose,
In Holland half drowned in interest and prose?
By Greece and past ages what need I be tried,
When the Hague and the present are both on my side?
And is it enough for the joys of the day,
To think what Anacreon or Sappho would say?
When good Vandergoes, and his provident *vrow*,
As they gaze on my triumph, do freely allow,
That, search all the province, you'll find no man *dàr* is
So blest as the *Englishen Heer Secretar'* is.

If Prior had been living now, he would have found the greatest want of travelling accommodation in a country for whose more serious wants we have to answer, without having her wit to help us to an excuse. There is a story told of an Irish post-chaise, the occupier of which, without quitting it, had to take to his heels. It was going down hill as fast as wind and the impossibility of stopping could make it, when the foot

passengers observed a couple of legs underneath, emulating, with all their might, the rapidity of the wheels. The bottom had come out; and the gentleman was obliged to run for his life.

We must relate another anecdote of an Irish post-chaise, merely to show the natural tendencies of the people to be lawless in self-defence. A friend of ours,[1] who was travelling among them, used to have this proposition put to him by the postilion whenever he approached a turnpike. "Plase your honour, will I drive at the pike?" The pike hung loosely across the road. Luckily, the rider happened to be of as lawless a turn for justice as the drive, so the answer was always a cordial one:—"Oh yes—drive at the pike." The pike made way accordingly; and in a minute or two, the gate people were heard and seen, screaming in vain after the illegal charioteers.

> Fertur equis auriga, neque audit currus.—VIRGIL.
>
> The driver's borne beyond their swearing,
> And the post-chaise is hard of hearing.

As to following them, nobody in Ireland thinks of moving too much, legal or illegal.

The pleasure to be had in a mail-coach is not so much at one's command, as that in a post-chaise. There is generally too little room in it, and too much hurry out of it. The company must not lounge over their breakfast, even if they are all agreed. It is an understood thing that they are to be uncomfortably punctual. They must get in at seven o'clock, though they are all going upon business they do not like or care about, or will have to wait till nine before they can do anything. Some persons know how to manage this haste, and breakfast and dine in the cracking of a whip. They stick with their fork, they joint, they sliver, they bolt. Legs and wing vanish before them like a dragon's before a knight-errant. But if one is not a clergyman or a regular jolly fellow, one has no chance this way. To be diffident or polite is fatal. It is a merit easily acknowledged, and as quickly set aside. At last you begin upon a leg and are called off.

A very troublesome degree of science is necessary for being well settled in the coach. We remember travelling in our youth, upon the north road with an orthodox elderly gentleman of venerable peruke, who talked much with a grave-looking young man about universities, and won our inexperienced heart

[1] Mr. Shelley.

with a notion that he was deep in Horace and Virgil. He was deeper in his wig. Towards evening, as he seemed restless, we asked with much diffidence whether a change, even for the worse, might not relieve him; for we were riding backwards, and thought that all elderly people disliked that way. He insinuated the very objection; so we recoiled from asking him again. In a minute or two, however, he insisted that we were uneasy ourselves, and that he must relieve us for our own sake. We protested as filially as possible against this; but at last, out of mere shame of disputing the point with so benevolent an elder, we changed seats with him. After an interval of bland meditation, we found the evening sun full in our face.—His new comfort set him dozing; and every now and then he jerked his wig in our eyes, till we had the pleasure of seeing him take out a nightcap and look very ghastly.—The same person, and his serious young companion, tricked us out of a good bed we happened to get at the inn.

The greatest peculiarity attending a mail-coach arises from its travelling at night. The gradual decline of talk, the incipient snore, the rustling and shifting of legs and nightcaps, the cessation of other noises on the road—the sound of the wind or rain, of the moist circuit of the wheels, and of the time-beating tread of the horses—all dispose the traveller, who cannot sleep, to a double sense of the little that is left him to observe. The coach stops, the door opens, a rush of cold air announces the demands and merits of the guard, who is taking his leave, and is anxious to remember us. The door is clapped to again; the sound of everything outside becomes dim; and voices are heard knocking up the people of the inn, and answered by issuing yawns and excuses. Wooden shoes clog heavily about. The horses' mouths are heard, swilling up the water out of tubs. All is still again, and someone in the coach takes a long breath. The driver mounts, and we resume our way. It happens that we can sleep anywhere except in a mail-coach; so that we hate to see a prudent, warm, old fellow, who has been eating our fowls and intercepting our toast, put on his night-cap in order to settle himself till morning. We rejoice in the digs that his neighbour's elbow gives him, and hail the long-legged traveller that sits opposite. A passenger of our wakeful description must try to content himself with listening to the sounds above mentioned; or thinking of his friends; or turning verses, as Sir Richard Blackmore did, "to the rumbling of his coach's wheels."

The stage-coach is a great and unpretending accommodation. It is a cheap substitute, notwithstanding all its eighteen-penny and two-and-sixpenny temptations, for keeping a carriage or a horse; and we really think, in spite of its gossiping, is no mean help to village liberality; for its passengers are so mixed, so often varied, so little yet so much together, so compelled to accommodate, so willing to pass a short time pleasantly, and so liable to the criticism of strangers, that it is hard if they do not get a habit of speaking, or even thinking more kindly of one another than if they mingled less often, or under other circumstances. The old and infirm are treated with reverence; the ailing sympathised with; the healthy congratulated; the rich not distinguished; the poor well met; the young, with their faces conscious of ride, patronised, and allowed to be extra. Even the fiery, nay the fat, learn to bear with each other; and if some high-thoughted persons will talk now and then of their great acquaintances, or their preference of a carriage, there is an instinct which tells the rest, that they would not make such appeals to their good opinion, if they valued it so little as might be supposed. Stoppings and dust are not pleasant, but the latter may be had on grander occasions; and if anyone is so unlucky as never to keep another stopping himself, he must be content with the superiority of his virtue.

The mail or stage-coachman, upon the whole, is no inhuman mass of great-coat, gruffness, civility, and old boots. The latter is the politer, from the smaller range of acquaintance, and his necessity for preserving them. His face is red, and his voice rough, by the same process of drink and catarrh. He has a silver watch with a steel chain, and plenty of loose silver in his pocket, mixed with halfpence. He serves the houses he goes by for a clock. He takes a glass at every alehouse; for thirst, when it is dry, and for warmth when it is wet. He likes to show the judicious reach of his whip, by twigging a dog or a goose on the road, or children that get in the way. His tenderness to descending old ladies is particular. He touches his hat to Mr. Smith. He gives "the young woman" a ride, and lends her his box-coat in the rain. His liberality in imparting his knowledge to anyone that has the good fortune to ride on the box with him, is a happy mixture of deference, conscious possession, and familiarity. His information chiefly lies in the occupancy of houses on the road, prizefighters, Bow Street runners and accidents. He concludes that you know Dick Sams, or Old Joey, and proceeds to relate some of the stories that relish his

pot and tobacco in the evening. If any of the four-in-hand gentry go by, he shakes his head, and thinks they might find something better to do. His contempt for them is founded on modesty. He tells you that his off-hand horse is as pretty a goer as ever was, but that Kitty—"Yeah, now there, Kitty, can't you be still? Kitty's a devil, Sir, for all you wouldn't think it." He knows that the boys on the road admire him, and gives the horses an indifferent lash with his whip as they go by. If you wish to know what rain and dust can do, you should look at his old hat. There is an indescribably placid and paternal look in the position of his corduroy knees and old top-boots on the foot-board, with their pointed toes and never-cleaned soles. His *beau-idéal* of appearance is a frock-coat, with mother-o'-pearl buttons, a striped yellow waistcoat, and a flower in his mouth.

> But all our praises why for Charles and Robert?
> Rise, honest Mews, and sing the classic Bobart.

Is the quadrijugal virtue of that learned person still extant? That Olympic and Baccalaureated charioteer?—That best educated and most erudite of coachmen, of whom Dominie Sampson is alone worthy to speak? That singular punning and driving commentary on the *Sunt quos curriculo collegisse*? In short, the worthy and agreeable Mr. Bobart, Bachelor of Arts, who drove the Oxford stage some years ago, capped verses and the front of his hat with equal dexterity, and read Horace over his brandy-and-water of an evening? We had once the pleasure of being beaten by him in that capital art, he having brought up against us an unusual number of those cross-armed letters, as puzzling to verse-cappers as iron-cats unto cavalry, ycleped X's; which said warfare he was pleased to call to mind in after-times, unto divers of our comrades. The modest and natural greatness with which he used to say "Yait" to his horses, and then turn round with his rosy gills, and an eye like a fish, and give out the required verse, can never pass away from us, as long as verses or horses run.

Of the hackney-coach we cannot make as short work, as many persons like to make of it in reality. Perhaps it is partly a sense of the contempt it undergoes, which induces us to endeavour to make the best of it. But it has its merits, as we shall show presently. In the account of its demerits, we have been anticipated by a new, and we are sorry to say a very good, poetess, of the name of Lucy V—— L——, who has

favoured us with a sight of a manuscript poem,[1] in which they are related with great nicety and sensitiveness.

Reader. What, Sir, sorry to say that a lady is a good poetess?

Indicator. Only inasmuch, Madam, as the lady gives such authority to the anti-social view of this subject, and will not agree with us as to the beatitude of the hackney-coach.—But hold:—upon turning to the manuscript again, we find that the objections are put into the mouth of a dandy courtier. This makes a great difference. The hackney resumes all which it had lost in the good graces of the fair authoress. The only wonder is, how the courtier could talk so well. Here is the passage.

> Eban, untempted by the Pastry-cooks,
> (Of Pastry he got store within the Palace),
> With hasty steps, wrapp'd cloak, and solemn looks,
> Incognito upon his errand sallies,
> His smelling-bottle ready for the alleys;
> He pass'd the Hurdy-gurdies with disdain,
> Vowing he'd have them sent on board the galleys:
> Just as he made his vow, it 'gan to rain,
> Therefore he call'd a coach, and bade it drive amain.
>
> "I'll pull the string," said he, and further said,
> "Polluted Jarvey! Ah, thou filthy hack!
> Whose strings of life are all dried up and dead,
> Whose linsey-wolsey lining hangs all slack,
> Whose rug is straw, whose wholeness is a crack;
> And evermore thy steps go clatter-clitter;
> Whose glass once up can never be got back,
> Who prov'st, with jolting arguments and bitter,
> That 'tis of vile no-use to travel in a litter.
>
> "Thou inconvenience! thou hungry crop
> For all corn! thou snail creeper to and fro,
> Who while thou goest ever seem'st to stop,
> And fiddle-faddle standest while you go;
> I' the morning, freighted with a weight of woe,
> Unto some Lazar-house thou journiest,
> And in the evening tak'st a double row
> Of dowdies, for some dance or party drest,
> Besides the goods meanwhile thou movest east and west.
>
> "By thy ungallant bearing and sad mien,
> An inch appears the utmost thou couldst budge;
> Yet at the slightest nod, or hint, or sign,
> Round to the curbstone patient dost thou trudge,
> School'd in a beckon, learned in a nudge;
> A dull-eyed Argus watching for a fare;
> Quiet and plodding, thou dost bear no grudge
> To whisking Tilburies or Phaetons rare,
> Curricles, or Mail-coaches, swift beyond compare."

[1] By Mr. Keats. The manuscript purports to have been written by a Miss Lucy Vaughan Lloyd.

> Philosophising thus, he pull'd the check,
> And bade the coachman wheel to such a street;
> Who turning much his body, more his neck,
> Louted full low, and hoarsely did him greet.

The tact is here so nice, of the infirmities which are but too likely to beset our poor old friend, that we should only spoil it to say more. To pass then to the merits.

One of the greatest helps to a sense of merit in other things, is a consciousness of one's own wants. Do you despise a hackney-coach? Get tired; get old; get young again. Lay down your carriage, or make it less uneasily too easy. Have to stand up half an hour, out of a storm, under a gateway. Be ill, and wish to visit a friend who is worse. Fall in love, and want to sit next your mistress. Or if all this will not do, fall in a cellar.

Ben Jonson, in a fit of indignation at the niggardliness of James the First, exclaimed, "He despises me, I suppose, because I live in an alley:—tell him his soul lives in an alley." We think we see a hackney-coach moved out of its ordinary patience, and hear it say, "You there, who sit looking so scornfully at me out of your carriages, are yourself the think you take me for. Your understanding is a hackney-coach. It is lumbering, rickety, and at a stand. When it moves, it is drawn by things like itself. It is at once the most stationary and the most servile of commonplaces. And when a good thing is put into it, it does not know it."

But it is difficult to imagine a hackney-coach under so irritable an aspect. Hogarth has drawn a set of hats or wigs with countenances of their own. We have noticed the same thing in the faces of houses; and it sometimes gets in one's way in a landscape-painting, with the outlines of the rocks and trees. A friend tells us, that the hackney-coach has its countenance, with gesticulation besides: and now he has pointed it out, we can easily fancy it. Some of them looked chucked under the chin, some nodding, some coming at you sideways. We shall never find it easy, however, to fancy the irritable aspect above mentioned. A hackney-coach always appeared to us the most quiescent of movables. Its horses and it, slumbering on a stand, are an emblem of all the patience in creation, animate and inanimate. The submission with which the coach takes every variety of the weather, dust, rain, and wind, never moving but when some eddying blast makes its old body shiver, is only surpassed by the vital patience of the

horses. Can anything better illustrate the poet's line about

—Years that bring the philosophic mind,

than the still-hung head, the dim indifferent eye, the dragged and blunt-cornered mouth, and the gaunt imbecility of body dropping its weight on three tired legs in order to give repose to the lame one? When it has blinkers on, they seem to be shutting up its eyes for death, like the windows of a house. Fatigue and the habit of suffering have become as natural to the creature as the bit to its mouth. Once in half an hour it moves the position of its leg, or shakes its drooping ears. The whip makes it go, more from habit than from pain. Its coat has become almost callous to minor stings. The blind and staggering fly in autumn might come to die against its cheek.

Of a pair of hackney-coach horses, one so much resembles the other that it seems unnecessary for them to compare notes. They have that within them, which is beyond the comparative. They no longer bend their heads towards each other, as they go. They stand together as if unconscious of one another's company. But they are not. An old horse misses his companion, like an old man. The presence of an associate, who has gone through pain and suffering with us, need not say anything. It is talk, and memory, and everything. Something of this it may be to our old friends in harness. What are they thinking of, while they stand motionless in the rain? Do they remember? Do they dream? Do they still, unperplexed as their old blood is by too many foods, receive a pleasure from the elements; a dull refreshment from the air and sun? Have they yet a palate for the hay which they pull so feebly? or for the rarer grain, which induces them to perform their only voluntary gesture of any vivacity, and toss up the bags that are fastened on their mouths to get at its shallow feast?

If the old horse were gifted with memory (and who shall say he is not, in one thing as well as another?), it might be at once the most melancholy and pleasantest faculty he has; for the commonest hack has probably been a hunter or racer; has had his days of lustre and enjoyment; has darted along the course, and scoured the pasture; has carried his master proudly, or his lady gently; has pranced, has galloped, has neighed aloud, has dared, has forded, has spurned at mastery, has graced it and made it proud, has rejoiced the eye, has been crowded to as an actor, has been all instinct with life and quickness, has had his

very fear admired as courage, and been sat upon by valour as its chosen seat.

His ears up-prick'd; his braided hanging mane
Upon his compass'd crest now stands on end;
His nostrils drink the air; and forth again,
As from a furnace, vapours doth he send;
His eye, which scornfully glistens like fire,
Shows his hot courage and his high desire.

Sometimes he trots as if he told the steps,
With gentle majesty, and modest pride;
Anon he rears upright, curvets and leaps,
As who would say, lo! thus my strength is tried,
And thus I do to captivate the eye
Of the fair breeder that is standing by.

What recketh he his rider's angry stir,
His flattering holla, or his *Stand, I say*?
What cares he now for curb, or pricking spur?
For rich caparisons, or trappings gay?
He sees his love, and nothing else he sees,
For nothing else with his proud sight agrees.

Look, when a painter would surpass the life,
In limning out a well proportion'd steed,
His art with nature's workmanship at strife,
As if the dead the living should exceed;
So did this horse excel a common one,
In shape, in courage, colour, pace, and bone.

Round-hoof'd, short-jointed, fetlock shag and long,
Broad breast, full eyes, small head, and nostril wide;
High crest, short ears, straight legs, and passing strong;
Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide;
Look, what a horse should have, he did not lack,
Save a proud rider on so proud a back.

Alas! his only riders now are the rain and a sordid harness! The least utterance of the wretchedest voice makes him stop and become a fixture. His loves were in existence at the time the old sign, fifty miles hence, was painted. His nostrils drink nothing but what they cannot help,—the water out of an old tub. Not all the hounds in the world could make his ears attain any eminence. His mane is scratchy and lax. The same great poet who wrote the triumphal verses for him and his loves, has written their living epitaph:

The poor jades
Lob down their heads, dropping the hide and hips,
The gum down roping from their pale dead eyes;
And in their pale dull mouths the gimmal bit
Lies foul with chew'd grass, still and motionless.

King Henry V, Act IV, sc. ii.

There is a song called the *High-mettled Racer*, describing the

progress of a favourite horse's life, from its time of vigour and glory, down to its furnishing food for the dogs. It is not as good as Shakespeare; but it will do, to those who are half as kind as he. We defy anybody to read that song or be in the habit of singing it or hearing it sung, and treat horses as they are sometimes treated. So much good may an author do, who is in earnest, and does not go in a pedantic way to work. We will not say that Plutarch's good-natured observation about taking care of one's old horse did more for that class of retired servants than all the graver lessons of philosophy. For it is philosophy which first sets people thinking; and then some of them put it in a more popular shape. But we will venture to say, that Plutarch's observation saved many a steed of antiquity a superfluous thump; and in this respect, the author of the *High-mettled Racer* (Mr. Dibdin we believe, no mean man in his way) may stand by the side of the old illustrious biographer. Next to ancient causes, to the inevitable progress of events, and to the practical part of Christianity (which persons, the most accused of irreligion, have preserved like a glorious infant, through ages of blood and fire) the kindliness of modern philosophy is more immediately owing to the great national writers of Europe, in whose schools we have been children:—to Voltaire in France, and Shakespeare in England. Shakespeare, in his time, obliquely pleaded the cause of the Jew, and got him set on a common level with humanity. The Jew has since been not only allowed to be human, but some have undertaken to show him as the "best good Christian though he knows it not." We shall not dispute the title with him, nor with the other worshippers of Mammon, who force him to the same shrine. We allow, as things go in that quarter, that the Jew is as great a Christian as his neighbour, and his neighbour as great a Jew as he. There is neither love nor money lost between them. But at all events, the Jew is a man; and with Shakespeare's assistance, the time has arrived, when we can afford to acknowledge the horse for a fellow-creature, and treat him as one. We may say for him, upon the same grounds and to the same purpose, as Shakespeare said for the Israelite, "Hath not a horse organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?" Oh—but some are always at hand to cry out,—it would be effeminate to think too much of these things!—Alas! we have no notion of asking the gentlemen to

think too much of anything. If they will think at all, it will be a great gain. As to effeminacy (if we must use that ungallant and partial word, for want of a better) it is cruelty that is effeminate. It is selfishness that is effeminate. Anything is effeminate, which would get an excitement, or save a proper and manly trouble, at the undue expense of another.—How does the case stand then between those who ill-treat their horses, and those who spare them?

To return to the coach. Imagine a fine coach and pair, which are standing at the door of a house, in all the pride of their strength and beauty, converted into what they may both become, a hackney, and its old shamblers. Such is one of the meditations of the philosophic eighteenpenny rider. A hackney-coach has often the arms of nobility on it. As we are going to get into it, we catch a glimpse of the faded lustre of an earl's or marquis's coronet, and think how many light or proud hearts have ascended those now rickety steps. In this coach perhaps an elderly lady once rode to her wedding, a blooming and blushing girl. Her mother and sister were on each side of her; the bridegroom opposite in a blossom-coloured coat. They talk of everything in the world of which they are not thinking. The sister was never prouder of her. The mother with difficulty represses her own pride and tears. The bride, thinking he is looking at her, casts down her eyes, pensive in her joy. The bridegroom is at once the proudest, and the humblest, and the happiest man in the world—For our parts, we sit in a corner, and are in love with the sister. We dream she is going to speak to us in answer to some indifferent question, when a hoarse voice comes in at the front window, and says, "Whereabouts, Sir?"

And grief has consecrated thee, thou reverend dilapidation, as well as joy! Thou hast carried unwilling, as well as willing hearts; hearts, that have thought the slowest of thy paces too fast; faces that have sat back in a corner of thee, to hide their tears from the very thought of being seen. In thee the destitute have been taken to the poorhouse, and the wounded and sick to the hospital; and many an arm has been round many an insensible waist. Into thee the friend or the lover has hurried, in a passion of tears, to lament his loss. In thee he has hastened to condole the dying or the wretched. In thee the father, or mother, or the older kinswoman, more patient in her years, has taken the little child to the grave, the human jewel that must be parted with.

But joy appears in thee again, like the look-in of the sunshine. If the lover has gone in thee unwillingly, he has also gone willingly. How many friends hast thou not carried to merry-meetings! How many young parties to the play! How many children, whose faces thou hast turned in an instant from the extremity of lachrymose weariness to that of staring delight. Thou hast contained as many different passions in thee as a human heart; and for the sake of the human heart, old body, thou art venerable. Thou shalt be as respectable as a reduced old gentleman, whose very slovenliness is pathetic. Thou shalt be made gay, as he is over a younger and richer table, and thou shalt be still more touching for the gaiety.

We wish the hackney-coachman were as interesting a machine as either his coach or horses; but it must be owned, that of all the driving species he is the least agreeable specimen. This is partly to be attributed to the life which has most probably put him into his situation; partly to his want of outside passengers to cultivate his gentility; and partly to the disputable nature of his fare, which always leads him to be lying and cheating. The waterman of the stand, who beats him in sordidness of appearance, is more respectable. He is less of a vagabond, and cannot cheat you. Nor is the hackney-coachman only disagreeable in himself, but, like Falstaff reversed, the cause of disagreeableness in others; for he sets people upon disputing with him in pettiness and ill-temper. He induces the mercenary to be violent, and the violent to seem mercenary. A man whom you took for a pleasant laughing fellow, shall all of a sudden put on an irritable look of calculation, and vow that he will be charged with a constable, rather than pay the sixpence. Even fair woman shall waive her all-conquering softness and sound a shrill trumpet in reprobation of the extortionate charioteer, whom, if she were a man, she says, she would expose. Being a woman, then, let her not expose herself. Oh, but it is intolerable to be so imposed upon! Let the lady, then, get a pocket-book, if she must, with the hackney-coach fares in it; or a pain in the legs, rather than the temper; or, above all, let her get wiser, and have an understanding that can dispense with the good opinion of the hackney-coachman. Does she think that her rosy lips were made to grow pale about two-and-sixpence; or that the expression of them will ever be like her cousin Fanny's, if she goes on?

The stage-coachman likes the boys on the road, because he knows they admire him. The hackney-coachman knows

that they cannot admire him, and that they can get up behind his coach, which makes him very savage. The cry of "Cut behind!" from the malicious urchins on the pavement, wounds at once his self-love and his interest. He would not mind overloading his master's horses for another sixpence, but to do it for nothing is what shocks his humanity. He hates the boy for imposing upon him, and the boys for reminding him that he has been imposed upon; and he would willingly twinge the cheeks of all nine. The cut of his whip over the coach is malignant. He has a constant eye to the road behind him. He has also an eye to what may be left in the coach. He will undertake to search the straw for you, and miss the half-crown on purpose. He speculates on what he may get above his fare, according to your manners or company; and knows how much to ask for driving faster or slower than usual. He does not like wet weather so much as people suppose; for he says it rots both his horses and harness, and he takes parties out of town when the weather is fine, which produces good payments in a lump. Lovers, late supper-eaters, and girls going home from boarding-school, are his best pay. He has a rascally air of remonstrance when you dispute half the overcharge, and according to the temper he is in, begs you to consider his bread, hopes you will not make such a fuss about a trifle; or tells you, you may take his number or sit in the coach all night.

A great number of ridiculous adventures must have taken place, in which hackney-coaches were concerned. The story of the celebrated harlequin Lunn, who secretly pitched himself out of one into a tavern window, and when the coachman was about to submit to the loss of his fare, astonished him by calling out again from the inside, is too well known for repetition. There is one of Swift, not perhaps so common. He was going, one dark evening, to dine with some great man, and was accompanied by some other clergymen, to whom he gave their cue. They were all in their canonicals. When they arrive at the house, the coachman opens the door, and lets down the steps. Down steps the Dean, very reverend in his black robes; after him comes another personage, equally black and dignified; then another; then a fourth. The coachman, who recollects taking up no greater number, is about to put up the steps, when another clergyman descends. After giving way to this other, he proceeds with great confidence to toss them up, when lo! another comes. Well, there cannot, he thinks, be more than six. He is mistaken. Down comes a seventh, then an eighth;

then a ninth; all with decent intervals; the coach, in the meantime, rocking as if it were giving birth to so many dæmons. The coachman can conclude no less. He cries out, "The devil! the devil!" and is preparing to run away, when they all burst into laughter. They had gone round as they descended, and got in at the other door.

We remember in our boyhood an edifying comment on the proverb of "all is not gold that glistens." The spectacle made such an impression upon us, that we recollect the very spot, which was at the corner of a road in the way from Westminster to Kennington, near a stone-mason's. It was a severe winter, and we were out on a holiday, thinking, perhaps, of the gallant hardships to which the ancient soldiers accustomed themselves, when we suddenly beheld a group of hackney-coachmen, not, as Spenser says of his witch,

> Busy, as *seemed*, about some wicked gin,

but pledging each other in what appeared to us to be little glasses of cold water. What temperance, thought we! What extraordinary and noble content! What more than Roman simplicity! Here are a set of poor Englishmen, of the homeliest order, in the very depth of winter, quenching their patient and honourable thirst with modicums of cold water! O true virtue and courage! O sight worthy of the Timoleons and Epaminondases! We know not how long we remained in this error; but the first time we recognised the white devil for what it was —the first time we saw through the crystal purity of its appearance—was a great blow to us. We did not then know what the drinkers went through; and this reminds us that we have omitted one great redemption of the hackney-coachman's character—his being at the mercy of all chances and weathers. Other drivers have their settled hours and pay. He only is at the mercy of every call and every casualty; he only is dragged, without notice, like the damned in Milton, into the extremities of wet and cold, from his alehouse fire to the freezing rain; he only must go anywhere, at what hour and to whatever place you choose, his old rheumatic limbs shaking under his weight of rags, and the snow and sleet beating into his puckered face, through streets which the wind scours like a channel.

RECOLLECTIONS OF OLD ACTORS

THE removal of our place of publication to Brydges Street has reminded us, that many years ago we began writing theatricals at the house two doors from us, where the paper (*The News*) is still published in which we made our début. May it live for ever! We rejoice in its neighbourhood, and hope it is not sorry for ours. It must now be nearly thirty years since we first wrote articles in the newspapers. We were then in our boyhood, or rather lad-hood. Not many years short of that period, we adventured on the perilous task of criticism; and here we are again, in the same street, almost on the same spot, occupied with a new paper, and pursuing the old track. It makes us feel as if we were beginning life over again.

Drury Lane Theatre is not the same identical Drury Lane it was then. It is on the same spot, but its body has been altered. It is the old friend with a new face. Covent Garden has experienced the same rejuvenescence. Alas! why cannot actors and play-goers grow young again too! Why cannot they be old friends with new faces,—the interior spirit the same, but the body remoulded! How patiently one would stand to have the scaffold set up round about us, while the little genii (whoever they were that acted the part of bricklayers) should pursue their task of restoration, elevating one's front, extending the wings, and new glazing those dimmed windows, the eyes! Then to take down the scaffolding; and like the statue of Memnon, we would sing at the touch of morning.

It is a pity that some such thing cannot take place, for the sake of those that particularly desire it. Rabelais says that he was sure he must have been the son of a king, because nobody had more princely inclinations. We incline, in the same manner, to be so young in our feelings, and to desire such a good long life before us to do a world of things in, that it seems as if we had a right to it. Mortality is a good provision, considering that the world has not come to its state of enjoyment, and that people in general, by the time they are forty, hardly know what to do with their Sundays: but an exception might be made, we think, in favour of those who could occupy all their hours some way or other for a hundred years to come, and who have not yet got over their love even of gingerbread. It will take us at least twenty years longer before we arrive at an indifference to lemon-cake. A "book of pictures" we cannot conceive the

possibility of not caring for; and as to the bright visions of nymphs, and goddesses, and Miss Smith, which filled our dreams, sleeping and waking, do we not take Madame Pasta for the very personification of truth? and did we not go seven times to see Miss Inverarity, because she has the very voice of cheerful girlhood, high and trusting, and we are sure, while we are hearing her, that there is one person among the audience of her own age? Did we, and do we not believe in the marvels of Cinderella, just as much as if we had come ten minutes ago, from reading the little gilt story-book on a school step? And did not the dance of the nymphs with torches appear to us as if a page out of Ovid had become true? Have we not, in short, faith infinite, hope,—we dare to add charity; yea, even more than we had at sophisticate seventeen, when people are for being something different from what they are? We beg leave to say, our age is *fifteen*; we have run the great circle, and come round to it: and we think it a little hard that we are forced to look so much older.

There is scarcely any one performer remaining at Drury Lane of all that we remember when we first began writing theatricals. We are not sure there is even one. Liston and Dowton came soon, but we recollect the débuts of both—of the former certainly. Farren is quite a modern, and Harley. Mrs. Orger made her appearance years afterwards, and we have none of the then old ladies, Mrs. Sparks, Mrs. Mattocks, Miss Pope. The reigning women then were, Miss Pope, with her precise bit of a voice, and genuine humour; Mrs. Mattocks, who had a never-failing recipe of a sudden flash of laughter, starting out of an acrid face; the beautiful and good-natured Mrs. Powell, with her honeyed tones (those who recollect them surely must do something for her in her old age); Miss Murray (afterwards Mrs. Henry Siddons) with her sweet voice and eyes, the latter a little too rolling; Mrs. Henry Johnstone, a slight, handsome creature, with a formidable power of looking vixenish; Miss Duncan, now Mrs. Davison, long a most clever actress with a liberal style; Mrs. Jordan, delightful Mrs. Jordan, whose voice did away the cares of the whole house, before they saw her come in, and Mrs. Siddons, the mighty mother of the pall and sceptre. We always remember her as the mother,—as something elderly, and even gaunt. We suspect that, with all her talents, she was, by nature, something of a dowager, compared with such a queen as Pasta.

Mrs. Gibbs was flourishing at that time, but she was at the

Haymarket, very good, and very pretty in chambermaids and black-mittened rustics.

There also was Mrs. Mills, a tight little actress, whose tightness led her to play drummers; and Madame Storace, loud, free, and clever, with a reedy voice; and Mrs. Crouch, once lovely, then going the way of all forsaken princes' mistresses; and Mrs. Billington, the favourite great singer, looking like a handsome apoplexy, and straining her throat till you thought she would have one; and Mrs. Bland, the favourite little singer, with a voice like her name, and a short, thick person, and dark face to match, which her sweet ballads made ever welcome. What troubles did not all these people have! What pleasures too! And how much pleasure did they not give!

With respect to the men, we begin to think that Mathews was at Drury Lane in those days; but we are not sure. We remember him at the Haymarket, where Liston came out. Elliston was the great man at Drury, and John Kemble at Covent Garden. We used to be heretical enough to think the former the greater natural genius of the two, though of a less heroical turn for tragedy; and we think so still. As a cordial and dashing comedian, in first-rate characters, we never saw him equalled. No gallant knew how to make love as he did. He had a fervour and a breath, as well as a cheerful eye and a most urgent voice, that made his energy of some consequence.

Lewis surpassed him in airiness; but there was no gentleman comedian who comprised so many qualities of his art as he did, or who could diverge so well into those parts of tragedy which find a connecting link with the graver powers of the comedian in their gracefulness and humanity. He was the best Wildair, the best Archer, the best Aranza; and carrying the seriousness of Aranza a little further, or making him a *tragic gentleman* instead of a comic, he became the best Mortimer, and even the best Macbeth, of any performer who excelled in comedy. When Charles Kemble acts comedy he gives you the idea of an actor who has come out of the chivalrous part of tragedy. It is grace and show that are most natural to him!—the ideal of mediocrity. Elliston being naturally a comedian, and comedy of the highest class demanding a greater sympathy with actual flesh and blood, his tragedy, though less graceful than Charles Kemble's, was more natural and cordial. He suffered and was shaken more. The other, in his greatest grief, is but like the statue of some Apollo Belvedere vivified, frowning in beauty, and making a grace of his sorrow. The god remains impassive

to ordinary suffering. Elliston's features were nothing nearly so handsome or so finely cut as the others; but they were more sensitive and intelligent. He had nothing of the poetry of tragedy; the other has the form of it; but Elliston, in Macbeth, could give you something of the weak, and sanguine, and misgiving usurper; and in Mortimer, in the *Iron Chest*, he has moved the audience to tears. It ought not to be forgotten, that he restored that character to the stage, when John Kemble had killed it with his frigidity.

The tragedy of this accomplished actor was, however, only an elongation, or drawing out, of the graver and more sensitive part of his comedy. It was in comedy that he was the master. When Keene appeared and extinguished Kemble, Elliston seems prudently to have put out his tragic lamp. In comedy, after the death of Lewis, he remained without a rival. He had three distinguished excellences—dry humour, gentlemanly mirth, and fervid gallantry. His features were a little too round, and his person latterly became a great deal too much so. But we speak of him in his best days. His face, in one respect, was of that rare order which is peculiarly fitted for the expression of enjoyment—it laughed with the eyes as well as mouth. His eyes, which were not large, grew smaller when he was merry, and twinkled with glee and archness; his smile was full of enjoyment; and yet the moment he shook his head with a satirical deprecation, or dropped the expression of his face into an innuendo, nothing could be drier or more angular than his mouth. There was a generosity in his style, both in its greater and smaller points. He understood all the little pretended or avowed arts of a gentleman, when he was conversing or complimenting, or making love, everything which implied the necessity of attention to the other person, and a just, and as it were, mutual consciousness of the graces of life on his own. His manners had the true *minuet dance* spirit of gentility,—the knowledge how to give and take, with a certain recognition of the merits on either side, even in the midst of raillery. And then his voice was remarkable for its union of the manly with the melodious; and as a lover, nobody approached him. Certainly nobody approached a woman as he did. It was the reverse of that preposterous style of *touch and avoid*—that embracing at arms' length, and hinting of a mutual touch on the shoulders,—by which the ladies and gentlemen of the stage think fit to distinguish themselves from the characters they perform, and even the Pollys and Macheaths propitiate our good opinion. Elliston

made out that it was no shame to love a woman, and no shame in her to return his passion. He took her hand, he cherished it against his bosom, he watched the moving of her countenance, he made the space less and less between them, and as he at length burst out into some exclamation of "charming!" or "lovely!" his voice trembled, not with weakness, but with the strength and fervour of its emotion. All the love, on the stage, since this (with the exception of Macready's domestic tenderness), is not worth twopence, and fit only to beget waiters.

In calling to mind the pleasant hours that have been given us by the talents of Elliston, we must not forget to mention his defects. In tragedy, for want of a strong sympathy with the serious, he sometimes got into a commonplace turbulence, and at others put on an affected solemnity; and he was in the habit of *hawing* between his words. The longer he was a manager, the worse this habit became. He was not naturally inclined to the authoritative; but having once commenced it in order to give weight to his levity, he seems to have carried about the habit with him to maintain his importance. Unfortunately, he fancied that he was never more natural than on these occasions. He said once, at the table of a friend of ours, clapping himself on the knee, and breathing with his usual fervour, "Nature - *aw*, sir, is everything - *aw*; I - *aw* am always - *aw* natural - *aw*."

Theodore Hook had a ludicrous story of his calling upon Elliston at the Surrey Theatre, and having some conversation with him in the midst of his managerial occupations. In the course of their dialogue, Elliston would start in a grand manner from the subject, and give some direction to his underlings. He called for two of them successively in the following manner:

Elliston (*turning suddenly to the right, and breathing with all his fervour*), "Night Watchman!" (*Enter Night Watchman, and has a word or two spoken to him by the manager.*)

Elliston (*scarcely having resumed the discourse, and turning suddenly as before*), "Other Night Watchman!" (*Enter Other Night Watchman, and is spoken to in like manner. The histrionic sovereign then resumes his discourse with Mr. Hook, with tranquil dignity.*)

We had an hour's conversation with him once at Drury Lane; during which, in answer to some observation we made respecting the quantity of business he had to get through, he told us, that he had formed himself "on the model of the Grand Pensionary De Witt." Coming with him out of the theatre, we noticed the present portico in Brydges Street, which had just been added

to the front, and said that it seemed to have started up like magic. "Yes, sir," said he, "energy is the thing: I no sooner said it, than it was done—it was *a Bonaparte blow*."

There was real energy in all this, and the right animal spirits, as well as an innocent pedantry: nor did it hinder him from being the delightful comedian we have described. He could not have been it, had he not been pleased with himself: and a little superfluous self-complacency off the stage was to be pardoned him. A successful actor would be a phenomenon of modesty if he were not one of the vainest of men. Nobody gets such applause as he does, and in such an intoxicating way, except a conqueror entering a city.

Then there was Bannister (now enjoying the *otium cum benignitate*), at the top of another line of comedy, not omitting homely domestic tragedy. His Walter, in the *Children in the Wood*, was as good, in its way, as Mrs. Siddons's Lady Macbeth; and his Job Thornberry, in *John Bull*, was as superior to Fawcett's as a brazier is to his brass. Bannister was one of those actors who give you the idea of being genuine honest men, and make you happy. Fawcett was excellent also in his line, which was that of impudent servants and gabbling pedagogues. No Pangloss and Caleb Quotem have ever been so good as his. The other men were John Kemble, the very statue of an old Roman set walking; Pope, who had a dashing tragic style, but was monotonous, and was always lifting up his arms, like St. Paul preaching at Athens; Raymond, a melodramatic sort of actor, more intelligent than any one of the present, though harsh; Henry Johnstone, another of a more ideal cast, and more quietly effective, though his handsomeness made him somewhat foppish; Murray, the father of Miss Murray, a very sensible and pleasing actor in old gentlemen; Powell, the last of the declamatory, white-handkerchief mourners of an older school; Lewis, the essence of lightness, of whim, of the mercurial (we have often described him:[1] he is not to be replaced); Munden, who

[1] Let the reader picture to himself a slight, youthful figure, of middle height, with sprightly eyes half shut with laughing, a mouth that showed its teeth a little when it smiled; restless, and yet gentlemanly manners; a pair of gloved hands that went through all the varieties of illustration that hands can insinuate, and thrust the point of a joke into your ribs with a finger, to the exclamation of "you dog!"—light airy voice, harmonising with the look of the face, often out of breath with spirits, and reposing sometimes on long lower tones of ludicrous contrast; a head full of nods, and becks, and flutterings; and lastly, a habit of finishing his sentences with indescribable exclamations of *hoo!* and *phoo!* and a look of pouting astonishment, as if nothing remained on earth to wonder at but his triumphant foppery, and he joined the astonishment in order to

made every trifle of importance, and masticated his grins till they were irresistible; Simons, the most filching of filchers; Emery, a perfect Yorkshireman, startling in rustic tragedy; Wewitzer, the only Canton; Irish Johnstone, of most lackadaisical potency, and a good singer; Blanchard, the best Marquis de Grand Chateau we have seen, a most petulant and palsied Signor,—still extant, and much, in other things, as he was; and afterwards came Cooke, who took almost all the ideal out of tragedy, but put some good stuff into it, and was a painfully good Sir Pertinax; then Master Betty, the plaything of declamation, whose cleverness deserved a better fate; and after an interval, with many others still flourishing, Kean, the finest actor we ever beheld.

We ought to mention Robert Palmer, a dogged kind of natural actor, especially in characters of sturdy impudence or sottishness; but we knew him only in his decline. John Palmer was before our time. So was Miss Farren: and Suett was before our critical days, though we remember him well, with his quaint, thin manner, and his little slippery laugh.

We heard an exquisite anecdote of Suett the other day. It is not much to tell, but it is highly characteristic. Suett, it must be observed, was both one of the drollest and one of the simplest of mankind. His relish of a joke was infinite, but he gave rise to many a one unconsciously; and hung upon the world, in all things, betwixt a laugh and an astonishment. It was he that said when he was dying, "O dear! O dear! Bobby going to die! Here's a pretty job! Was there ever seen the like?"

Suett one day took it into his head, gravely, to teach clergymen how to read the Lord's Prayer! We forget the name of the public house from which his card of announcement was addressed, but it ran in some such manner as the following, and was in perfect good faith:

Clergymen taught to read the Lord's Prayer,
By Robert Suett, *Comedian.*
Address to the "Cat and Feathers," No. 21 *Drury Lane.*

be in the fashion. We have nothing like it nowadays: nothing so thin, so airy, so gentlemanly, so eternally young: for Lewis was the very same to the last. His slenderness and his animal spirits preserved his look of juvenility to the moment when he took leave of the stage. It was in the *Copper Captain*, with his epaulets dancing on his shoulders. He came forward at the end of the play to take leave, and for the first time in his life, perhaps, when on the stage, the good-natured actor shed tears and caused them. His gay voice failed him as he told the public that "for thirty years he had not once incurred their displeasure": and he was obliged to put up his cocked hat before his face to hide his emotion.

MR. KEMBLE

Mr. Kemble is a peculiar instance of almost all these essentials to good acting, and at the same time an example how much they may be injured by an indiscriminate application of study. His conceptions of character are strong where the characters themselves are strong, his attention to passions is fixed by large objects, he cannot sufficiently study the minute where minuteness is important, though as I shall hereafter explain he can give importance to minutenesses that mean nothing. He appears to submit everything to his judgment, and exhibits little of the enthusiasm of genius. The grander emotions are his chief study; he attaches a kind of loftiness to every sensation that he indulges, and thus conceives with much force the more majestic passions at the same time that he is raised above the pathetic passions, which always carry with them an air of weakness and humility.

For the expression of the loftier emotions no actor is gifted by nature with greater external means. His figure though not elegant is manly and dignified, his features are strongly marked with what is called the Roman character, and his head altogether is the heroic head of the antiquary and the artist. This tragic form assumes excellently well the gait of royalty, the vigorous majesty of the warrior, and the profound gravity of the sage: but its seriousness is unbending; his countenance seems to despise the gaiety it labours to assume, and its comic expression is comic because it is singularly wretched. Of the passion of love he can express nothing; the reason is obvious. Love from its dependent nature must always, unless associated with some other passion, betray an expression of tender feebleness, and such an expression is unknown to Mr. Kemble's countenance. The attempt of Mrs. Inchbald to make Mr. Kemble a lover is more honourable to her partiality for the friend than to her affection for just criticism. She says, that he can paint love more vigorously than any other man, though he cannot love *moderately*: in her opinion, "sighs, soft complainings, a plaintive voice, and tender looks bespeak mere moderation; Mr. Kemble," she continues, "must be struck to the heart's core, or not at all: he must be wounded to the soul with grief, despair, or madness." But this is mistaking the associated passion for its companion. What a lover is he who can neither speak softly nor look tenderly? No man according to this idea can express a perfect

love, that is, a love opposed to *mere moderation*, unless he is struck with grief, or desperate, or mad: but by such an association of outrageous passions the expression of the individual one will not be a perfect, because it is not a simple expression: the actor who cannot express an individual passion without the assistance of others can no more be said to be master of that passion, than a singer can be called a master of his art who cannot sing without an accompaniment.

It is in characters that are occupied with themselves and with their own importance, it is in the systematic and exquisite revenge of Zanga, in the indignant jealousy of Othello, and in the desperate ambition of King John that Mr. Kemble is the actor. There is always something sublime in the sudden completion of great objects, and perhaps there is not a sublimer action on the stage than the stride of Mr. Kemble as Zanga, over the body of his victim, and his majestic exultation of revenge.

But if he succeeds in the prouder passions, his diligence of study has given him no less success in the expression of impressive seriousness.

The character of Penruddock in *The Wheel of Fortune* is his greatest performance, and I believe it to be a perfect one. It is admirable, not because the tenderness of his love, as Mrs. Inchbald tells us, "appears beneath the roughest manners," but because the very defect which hurts his general style of acting, that studious and important preciseness, which is affectation in all his other characters, contributes to the strength, to the nature of Penruddock. Those who can discern any peculiar expression of tenderness under the roughness of Mr. Kemble's acting mistake their feelings for their observation: it is the tenderness the character is supposed to feel, not what he actually exhibits, it is the tenderness of the author, not of the actor, which they discern; if there are one or two phrases of tenderness uttered by the stern recluse, they have a pathetic effect not because they are expressed with a peculiar tenderness by the actor, but because a soft emotion so unexpected in one of his appearance produces a strong effect from the strength of contrast. To give a man imaginary praise is to give him real dispraise. Mr. Kemble himself would never think of valuing his own performance for its tenderness of expression; he would value it, and with justice, for its severity of expression, for its display of external philosophy, and for its contempt of everything that can no longer amuse.

Wherever this air of self-importance or abstraction is required, Mr. Kemble is excellent. It is no small praise to say of an actor that he excels in soliloquies: these solitary discourses require great judgment because the speaker has no assistance from others, and because the audience, always awake to action, is inclined during a soliloquy to seek repose in inattention. Indeed to gain the attention of an audience is always in some degree to gain their applause, and this applause must cheerfully be given to Mr. Kemble, who by his busy air and impressive manner always attaches importance to a speech of whatever interest or length. To this excellence in particular and to the general action of the stage he contributes by an exact knowledge of every stage artifice local and temporal, and I could not but admire the judicious contrivance by which he added a considerable interest to his first appearance in the season of 1805; the curtain rose and discovered a study; it was adorned with the most natural literary disorder possible: the grave actor appeared writing at a table with open books here and there about him; the globes, the library, the furniture, everything had its use, and no doubt its effect, for an audience, though perhaps insensibly, is always pleased with a natural scene. Of another necessary stage artifice, which is called *by-play*, and which beguiles the intervals of action by an air of perpetual occupation, he is a perfect master; he never stands feebly inactive, waiting for his turn to speak; he is never out of his place, he attends to everything passing on the stage at once, nor does he indulge himself in those complacent stares at the audience which occupy inferior actors.

This attention to the minute, however, is often employed needlessly; he has made it a study hardly less important than that of the passions, and hence arises the great fault of his acting, a laborious and almost universal preciseness. Some of the instances of this fault are so ludicrous that a person who had not seen him would scarcely credit the relation; he sometimes turns from one object to another with so cautious a circumflexion of head, that he is no doubt very often pitied by the audience for having a stiff neck; his words now and then follow one another so slowly, and his face all the while assumes so methodical an expression, that he seems reckoning how many lines he has learnt by heart; I have known him make an eternal groan upon the interjection *Oh!*, as if he were determined to show that his misery had not affected his lungs; and to represent an energetical address he has kept so continual a

jerking and nodding of the head, that at last if he represented anything at all, it could be nothing but Saint Vitus's dance: by this study of nonentities it would appear that he never pulls out his handkerchief without a design upon the audience, that he has as much thought in making a step as making a speech, in short, that his very finger is eloquent and that nothing means something. But all this neither delights nor deceives the audience: of an assembly collected together to enjoy a rational entertainment, the majority will always be displeased with what is irrational, though they may be unable to describe their sensations critically: irrationalities amuse in farce only. An audience when judging the common imitations of life have merely to say, "Is it like ourselves?"

Perhaps there is not a greater instance of the ill effects one bad habit, like this, can produce, than in Mr. Kemble's delivery. No actor in his declamation pleases more at some times or more offends at others. His voice is hollow and monotonous from a malformation, as it is said, of his organs of utterance: its weakness cannot command a variety of sound sufficiently powerful for all occasions, nor is its natural extent melodious or pleasing; but a voice naturally monotonous must be distinguished from a monotony of delivery; the latter neglects emphasis and expression, the former, though it will not always obtain, may always attempt both. No player perhaps understands his author better, and such a knowledge will easily impart to itself others: his declamation, therefore, is confident and exact, he is at all times carefully distinct, and his general delivery is marked, expressive, and even powerful: the art with which he supplies the natural weakness of his voice by an energy and significancy of utterance is truly admirable. But the same affectation, which indulges itself in an indiscriminate importance of manner, the same ambition of originality where originality is least wanted, characterises Mr. Kemble's pronunciation: it has induced him to defy all orthoepy and to allow no accent but what pleases his caprice or his love of innovation. To be novel for the mere sake of novelty belongs neither to genius nor to judgment. Mr. Kemble insists that the word *rode* should be *rod*, *beard* is metamorphosed into *bird*, he never *pierces* the heart but *purses* it, and *virtue* and *merchant* become in the dialect of the kitchen *varchue* and *marchant*; the strong syllable *er* appears to be an abomination, and is never allowed utterance; Pope says

To err is human, to forgive divine—

but Mr. Kemble will not consent to this, he says

To air is human—

making the moralist say, that it is the nature of man to dry his clean shirt or to take a walk: *thy* is changed into *the* probably because the sound of *my* is sometimes contracted into *mĕ*; but mutabilities of pronunciation in one word never argue for them in another; people are not accustomed to say, such a man has a *wrĕ* neck, or that it is very *drĕ* weather. Dr. Johnson who had an antipathy to the short pronunciation *wind* and wished to call it *wīnd*, attacked the custom by a ludicrous assemblage and mispronunciation of other words, in which the letter *i* is naturally long, and said with much critical gravity,—"*I have a mĭnd to fĭnd why you call that wĭnd.*" But this pleasantry did not change the pronunciation in general converse. Let us see how Mr. Kemble would improve the following lines: we will put his improvement, after the original, since the beauty of the contrast will be greater:

Virtue, thy happy wisdom's known
In making what we wish our own;
Nay, e'en to wish what wishes thee
Imparts the blest reality:
For since the soul that pierces mine,
Sweet Myra's soul, is full of thine,
In my breast too thy spirit stirs,
Since all my soul is full of hers.

Mr. Kemble's improvement:

Varchue, the happy wisdom's known
In making what we wish our own;
Nay, e'en to wish what wishes thee
Imparts the blest reality:
For since the soul that *purses* mine;
Sweet Myra's soul, is full of thine,
In my breast too thy spirit *stares*,
Since all my soul is full of *hairs*!

This is very amusing, but there is no rule for pronunciation but custom; as customs change, actors may change; but no individual should alter what he has no reason for altering, or what has either a bad effect or none at all when altered. There have been several attempts to vary the mode of spelling now in use; the latest innovation was practised by Ritson, a man of curious and happy research into old English literature, and one who might have boasted a better originality than that of making his words unintelligible: nobody has adopted a single one of these innovations, first because it is painful to depart from

old rules and habits, and secondly, because it is still more painful to depart from them without a cause. For the same reasons nobody will adopt Mr. Kemble's pronunciations, and if he were to carry his dialect into private life, he would be either pitied or laughed at. But why place his ambition where there are no hopes of original praise? I could mispronounce much better than he, when I was a mere infant.

Upon the whole Mr. Kemble appears to be an actor of correct rather than quick conception, of studious rather than universal or equal judgment, of powers some naturally defective but admirably improved and others excellent by nature but still more so by art; in short of a genius more compulsive of respect than attractive of delight. He does not present one the idea of a man who grasps with the force of genius, but of one who overcomes by the toil of attention. He never rises and sinks as in the enthusiasm of the moment; his ascension though grand is careful, and when he sinks it is with preparation and dignity. There are actors who may occasionally please more, but not one who is paid a more universal or profound attention.

MR. CHARLES KEMBLE

I DO not know what thoughtlessness or forgetfulness could have possessed me, when I proposed to class this elegant actor with the tragedians only. I must have been seized with a little of that languor, which is his worst affectation, and which is as infectious in an actor as in a supper of lettuces. But how could I forget his occasional vivacity, his occasional dry humour, and his inimitable pictures of intoxication, so natural and yet never disgusting; not to mention his frequent awfulness of frown, which is infinitely droll, though he does not know it.

Mr. Charles Kemble excels in three classes of character; in the tender lover like Romeo, in the spirited gentleman of tragedy, such as Laertes and Faulconbridge, and in a very happy mixture of the occasional debauchee and the gentleman of feeling, as in Shakespeare's Cassio and Charles Oakley in the *Jealous Wife*.

In theatric love, in that complaining softness with which the fancies of young ladies adorn their imaginary heroes, Mr. Charles Kemble is certainly the first performer on the stage. He seems

resolved to make up for his brother's utter deficiency in this respect. His performance of Romeo would undoubtedly be superior to that of Mr. Elliston, could he shake off his indolent languor. Fondness of attitude and looks of abstracted endearment acquire an additional charm, from his dignified and graceful aspect and from that reposing command in the air of his head and shoulders, which reminds us of the placid dignity of the Antinous. But this languor is occasionally so unhappy, that his attention to his mistress appears to be a painful effort, and instead of being tender from amatory feeling betrays a kind of civil pity for the poor lady, the true *comis in uxorem* of Horace.

That this weariness or affected patience of manner is not natural to the actor, but the mere result of bad habit, may be easily seen in the animation of his Laertes and his Faulconbridge. If in the former character he has little to display but personal spirit, in the latter he exhibits a very bold spirit of raillery, a gay insolence justified by the contemptibility of its object. It is with much skill that he suddenly bursts into a proud ridicule of the Duke of Austria, without indulging in the flourish of fist which common actors mistake for indignation: he does not, like a South Sea warrior, waste half his strength on the enemy by a preliminary bravado of gesture. All great effects are produced by contrast. Anger is never so noble as when it breaks out of a comparative continence of aspect; it is the earthquake bursting from the repose of nature.

One could not well excuse, even in tragedy, that perpetual lightning of frown with which Mr. Charles Kemble pierces the pit; and as to his perpetual bite of the lips, it is allowable to nobody but a young lady preparing her rosiest looks for company, or to a malicious and mean villain suddenly detected, or to a schoolboy perhaps when he is winding up his top. But this cloudiness of face, this system of frowning and biting is wonderfully misplaced in comedy; the νεφεληγερέτα Ζεύς, the cloud-compelling Jove, is not the god of levity. What with the lamps and the rouge, his eyes may indeed acquire much ferocious decision and brightness, but he would lose no reputation by leaving to Mr. H. Johnston the judgment of turning mere "meditation to madness." A frank youth, like Frederick Bramble in the *Poor Gentleman*, a character which Mr. C. Kemble otherwise performs with most appropriate spirit, never thinks of this gloomy stare, which amounts to the expression of an afflicted conscience; nor does a gay villain, like Plastic in *Town and Country*, make his resolutions with a countenance that

might betray him to the slightest observer. Mr. C. Kemble's ironical contempt of Reuben Glenroy's advice in this character, and of Sir Charles Cropland in *Frederick Bramble*, is in the happiest wonderment of tone: his languor becomes a beauty when thrown into the careless slur and patient acquiescence of his replies. Any cool humorist would talk in the same way. But what should we think of a man, who when he was meditating on the choice of a watch-string should dart into the most terrific side-frowns; or when he was asked whether he preferred pudding or pie, should knit his brows into an agony of logical doubt?

Guest (*after frowning with downward meditation*). Madam, I will take a little pie. (*Aside, after receiving the pie and frowning with awful study.*) I am not sure that pudding wouldn't have been better.

I was sorry to see that Mr. C. Kemble could not help carrying this ludicrous fault into his most careless intoxication: his representation of a superior sort of drunkard would otherwise be perfect. It is this representation which renders his Charles Oakley and his Cassio such finished and original performances. To amuse us, and at the same time to maintain our respect in intoxication, might be thought an impossibility, if he did not do both in these characters. But with all that relaxation of limb, which seems to destructive of gentlemanly appearance, with all that relaxation of countenance which is the very reverse of sensible expression, with all that gay disdain of common customs and civilities which wine inspires, he contrives not only to appear respectable but even to interest our feelings. I have seen him, when representing a fond husband who had been seduced into a debauch, absolutely borrow a pathos from this odious vice, and in the midst of his careless nonsense turn to his wife with a voice so quarrelling with himself, so broken between gaiety and remorse, so painful in its attempt to be strongly affectionate, that the contrast of his graces with his defects, of his powers with his wishes, of his love for his wife and his heartfelt inability to express it, reached all the domestic feelings of his audience. It is the same with his Cassio, whose remorse appears so much the stronger from his inability to rid himself of the debauch which he abhors. There is no actor, who imitates this defect with such a total want of affectation. All the other performers wish to be humorous drunkards, and by this error they cannot help showing a kind of abstract reasoning which defeats their purpose. They play a hundred antics with legs which a drunkard would be unable to lift, they make

a thousand grimaces which the jaws of a drunkard could not attempt from mere want of tone; they roll about from place to place, though his whole strength is exerted to command his limbs; they wish in short to appear drunk, when the great object of a drunkard is to appear sober.

Mr. Charles Kemble is upon the whole a very gentlemanly and useful actor, with much of graceful mediocrity and with an occasional display of great genius. It appears to me, that his unfortunate languor hides his real ability, and that, like a giant oppressed with sleepiness, he sinks to the level of feebler men. When I call him a useful actor, I do not apply the epithet like those newspapers, who bestow it on every actor that can do a number of things tolerably, and nothing well. Not that I would question, as to matters of stage convenience, the utility, much less the genius of any gentleman, who would undertake to read a book at a moment's notice: but Mr. C. Kemble is useful to the audience, as well as to the managers; if he undertakes a character not originally his own, he gives us its moral effects as well as its discourse; he gives us not only the face but the soul of his person, not only its gesticulation but its proper impulse. A bad actor may be defined as an animal, who utters a certain number of sounds to exercise the patience of a certain number of people.

MRS. SIDDONS

To write a criticism on Mrs. Siddons is to write a panegyric, and a panegyric of a very peculiar sort, for the praise will be true. Like her elder brother she has a marked and noble countenance and a figure more dignified than graceful, and she is like him in all his good qualities but not any of his bad ones. If Mr. Kemble studiously meditates a step or an attitude in the midst of passion, Mrs. Siddons never thinks about either and therefore is always natural, because on occasions of great feeling it is the passions should influence the actions: attitudes are not to be studied, as old Havard used to study them, between six looking-glasses: feel the passion and the action will follow. I know it has been denied that actors sympathise with the feelings they represent, and among other critics, Dr. Johnson is supposed to have denied it. The Doctor was accustomed

to talk very loudly at the play upon divers subjects, even when his friend Garrick was electrifying the house with his most wonderful scenes, and the worst of it was that he usually sat in one of the stage boxes: the actor remonstrated with him one night after the representation, and complained that the talking "disturbed his feelings": "*Pshaw! David,*" replied the critic, "*Punch has no feelings.*" But the Doctor was fond of saying his good things as well as lesser geniuses, and to say a good thing is not always to say a true one or one that is intended to be true. To call his friend a puppet, to give so contemptuous an appellation to a man whose powers he was at other times happy to respect, and whose death he lamented as having "eclipsed the gaiety of nations," must be considered as a familiar pleasantry rather than a betrayed opinion. The best way to solve the difficulty is to apply to an actor himself, but as I am not in the way of such an application, I think the complaint made by Garrick will do as well, since he talks of his feelings, as the means necessary to his performance. It appears to me, that the countenance cannot express a single passion perfectly, unless the passion is first felt: it is easy to grin representations of joy, and to pull down the muscles of the countenance as an imitation of sorrow, but a keen observer of human nature and its effects will easily detect the cheat; there are nerves and muscles requisite to expression, that will not answer the will on common occasions; but to represent a passion with truth, every nerve and muscle should be in its proper action, or the representation becomes weak and confused, melancholy is mistaken for grief, and pleasure for delight: it is from this feebleness of emotion so many dull actors endeavour to supply passion with vehemence of action and voice, as jugglers are talkative and bustling to beguile scrutiny. I have somewhere heard, that Mrs. Siddons has talked of the real agitation which the performance of some of her characters has made her feel.

To see the bewildered melancholy of Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep, or the widow's mute stare of perfected misery by the corpse of the gamester Beverley, two of the sublimest pieces of acting on the English stage, would argue this point better than a thousand critics. Mrs. Siddons has the air of never being the actress; she seems unconscious that there is a motley crowd called a pit waiting to applaud her, or that there are a dozen fiddlers waiting for her exit. This is always one of the marks of a great actor: the player who amuses himself by looking at the audience for admiration may be assured he never gets

any: it is in acting as in conferring obligations: one should have the air of doing nothing for a return.

If Mrs. Siddons has not every single requisite to a perfect tragedian, it is the amatory pathetic: in the despair of Belvidera for instance she rises to sublimity, but in the tenderness of Belvidera she preserves too stately and self-subdued an air: she can overpower, astonish, afflict, but she cannot win; her majestic presence and commanding features seem to disregard love, as a trifle to which they cannot descend. But it does not follow that a tragedian unable to sink into the softness of the tender passion, is the more to be respected for his undeviating dignity and spirit: it does not follow that he has a loftier genius; love though humble never moves our contempt; on the contrary it adds new interest to a character at other times dignified: in real life the greatest heroes and sages have acquired an extraordinary charm from their union of wisdom and tenderness, of conquest and gallant submission: and as we doubly admire the wise Plato for his amatory effusions and the chivalrous spirit of Henry the Great for the tenderness of his love, so on the stage the tragedian, who unites the hero and the lover, that is, who can display either character as it is required, is the more admirable genius. Besides, the figure of Mrs. Siddons is now too large and too matronly to represent youth, and particularly the immediate passions of youth; we hope that by the next season she will have given up the performance of characters suited neither to her age nor her abilities.

After this one defect I have in vain considered and reconsidered all the tragedies, in which I have seen her, to find the shadow of another. She unites with her noble conceptions of nature every advantage of art, every knowledge of stage propriety and effect. This knowledge, however, she displays not with the pompous minuteness of Mr. Kemble, but with that natural carelessness, which shows it to be the result of genius rather than grave study. If there is a gesture in the midst, or an attitude in the interval of action, it is the result of the impassioned moment; one can hardly imagine, there has been any such thing as a rehearsal for powers so natural and so spirited. Of the force of such mere action I recollect a sublime instance displayed by Mrs. Siddons in the insipid tragedy of *The Grecian Daughter*. This heroine has obtained for her aged and imprisoned father some unexpected assistance from the guard Philotas: transported with gratitude, but having nothing from the poet to give expression to her feelings, she starts with

extended arms and casts herself in mute prostration at his feet. I shall never forget the glow which rushed to my cheeks at this sublime action.

These are the effects Mr. Kemble should study, and not the clap-provoking frivolities of ending every speech with an energetic dash of the fist, or of running off the stage after a vehement declamation as if the actor was in haste to get his pint of wine. If the brother and sister are compared the palm both of genius and of judgment must undoubtedly be given to Mrs. Siddons: I question whether she understands her authors so intimately, but she gives double effect to their important passages, and their unimportant ones are allowed to sink into their proper mediocrity: where everything is raised into significance, the significance is destroyed. If an artist would study the expression of the passions, let him lay by the pictures of Le Brun, and copy the looks of Mrs. Siddons.

MR. MUNDEN

One of the most amiable effects of the modern drama is to injure those to whom it is most indebted for support. If the principal characters of Reynolds and of Dibdin are always out of nature, their representation, as I have already hinted, must be unnatural also; and as our comic actors are perpetually employed upon these punchinellos, as they are always labouring to grimace and grin them into applause, they become habituated and even partial to their antics, and can never afterwards separate the effect from the means, the applause from the unnatural style of acting. The extravagance, therefore, of look and gesture, so necessary to the caricatures of our farci-comic writers, they cannot help carrying into the characters of our best dramatists, to which it is every way injurious.

This is the great fault of Mr. Munden, who is unluckily one of the strongest supports to our gigantic farces, and whose powers, like his features, have been so twisted out of their proper direction, that they seem unable to recover themselves. Almost the whole force of his acting consists in two or three ludicrous gestures and an innumerable variety of as fanciful contortions of countenance as ever threw woman into hysterics: his features are like the reflection of a man's face in a ruffled

stream, they undergo a perpetual undulation of grin: every emotion is attended by a grimace, which he by no means wishes to be considered as unstudied, for if it has not immediately its effect upon the spectators he improves or continues it till it has; and I have seen his interlocutor disconcerted, and the performance stopped, by the unseasonable laughter of the audience, who were conquered into the notice of a posthumous joke by this ambitious pertinacity of muscle.

All this suits admirably well with a character entirely farcical, or with one that has no intrinsic humour, and I recollect no actor who by the mere abuse of his features could gain so much favour for a modern comedy. If ever such an abuse becomes natural, it is in the deformity of drunkenness. Mr. Munden, therefore, whose action is as confined as his features are vagrant, excels in the relaxed gesture and variable fatuity of intoxication. His most entertaining performances are always of this kind, as that for instance, of Crack in the *Turnpike Gate* and the Captain's servant in the musical puppet-show called the *English Fleet*. His attitude and looks in the latter piece, when he receives a ring from a lady as a reward for some courageous service, his tottering earnestness in contemplating the honour on his finger, and the conscious glance which he turns now and then at his captain behind him, exhibit a masterpiece of drunken vanity. These are the touches which brighten the miserable daubs of our dramatists, which throw life into their inanimate figures, and character into their half-formed countenances. Mr. Munden, in his imitation of an intoxicated man, always shows his judgment by standing as much as possible in one place. Our actors in general seem to forget that a person under the influence of liquor, unless he is almost insensible, always attempts a command of himself and restrains his motions as much as the weakness of his limbs will permit; they are too fond of reeling round the stage, and jerking up one leg at every step, like a tavern blood affecting his six bottles. I have heard that the late Mr. Suett used always to be really drunk when he performed a drunkard, but the generality of our performers may certainly be exculpated from such a charge: perhaps the only actor who approaches Munden in this exquisite display of brutality is Mr. Robert Palmer. Truly we stage critics treat of lofty matters!

But of simplicity Mr. Munden shows not a shadow; and as old men in general, and particularly old soldiers and citizens, have long forgotten the antics of schoolboys, this perpetual

mouth-making destroys his natural representation of age: no man in years accompanies his whole conversation with this harmony or rather this discord of feature; an old soldier would despise it as boyish, and an old citizen as unprofitable: an old courtier, perhaps, if his king is fond of buffoonery, is more likely to accommodate his countenance to the sallies of those about him, but when Mr. Munden represents Polonius, he forgets he is in a gloomy court, where the king and queen are afflicted with melancholy and the young prince Hamlet supposed to be deranged. In his performance of Menenius in *Coriolanus*, this buffoonery is still more inconsistent. Menenius was a man of wit and prudence, and is celebrated in history for his fable of the belly and the members, with which he appeased the discordant divisions of the people: Shakespeare, taking advantage of the familiarity of that popular address, has perhaps rendered the language and the manners of Menenius too generally familiar, and given the comedian an opportunity of displaying his merriment rather too broadly; but it should never be forgotten that Menenius was not only of the patrician order, a class of men proverbially haughty, but that he was the intimate friend of the haughty Coriolanus, who was the proudest man in Rome and not very likely to associate with buffoons. If Shakespeare, therefore, in his fondness for generalising the character of men and in his determination to avoid what may be called a chronology of nature, has represented Menenius in the light of a merry old modern nobleman, the actor would show his art and his classical judgment in preventing his mirth from extravagance by every possible temperance of action, so that the man of humour might not entirely overcome the man of rank. At any rate, Mr. Munden should endeavour to moderate the restlessness of his muscles in representing a patrician and a senator. But then the galleries would not laugh.

This actor in short loses half his proper effect by the very strength of his powers: he brings as much expression into his face for an emotion or even an innuendo, as he ought for the liveliest passions: thus he rarely gives us the shadows or gradations of feeling, from the mere exertion of his expression: he is a jumper, who in order to leap four yards, takes a spring that inevitably carries him six: he is like that poetical artist Mr. Fuseli, who to exhibit his anatomical skill discloses every joint and muscle of a clothed figure, when he should merely shadow out their appearances.

Strange! By the means defeated of the ends!

MR. MATHEWS

Those comedians are infinitely mistaken, who imagine that mere buffoonery or face-making is a surer method of attaining public favour than chastened and natural humour. A monstrous grin, that defies all description or simile, may raise a more noisy laughter, but as I have before observed, the merest pantomime clown will raise a still noisier: laughter does not always express the most satisfied enjoyment, and there is something in the ease and artlessness of true humour that obtains a more lasting though a more gradual applause: it is like a rational lover, who allows confidence and extravagant mirth to catch a woman's eye first, but wins his way ultimately from the very want of qualities which please merely to fatigue. While such an actor therefore as Dowton will attempt buffooneries in which he neither can nor ought to succeed, it is no small credit to Mr. Mathews, that he has the judgment to avoid in general what he really can exhibit with the greater effect. This is the proper pride of an actor who has a greater respect for the opinion of the boxes than of the galleries; this is the laudable ambition that would rather be praised by those who are worthy of respect themselves than by a clamorous mob who in fact applaud their own likeness in the vulgarity and nonsense so boisterously admired.

Such a judgment is the more praiseworthy in Mr. Mathews, as his principal excellence is the representation of officious valets and humorous old men, two species of character that with most actors are merely buffoons in livery and buffoons with walking-sticks. His attention to correctness, however, by no means lessens his vivacity, but it is the vivacity of the world, not of the stage; it seems rather his nature than his art, and though I dare say all actors have their hours of disquiet, and perhaps more than most men, yet he has not the air of one who elevates his sensations the moment he enters the stage and drops them the instant he departs. It is a very common and a very injurious fault with actors to come before the audience with a manner expressive of beginning a task; they adjust their neckcloths and hats as if they had dressed in a hurry, look about them as much as to say, "What sort of a house have I got this evening?" and commence their speeches in a tone of patient weariness, as if they contemplated the future labours of the evening. This is a frequent error with Mr. H. Johnston, and a most peculiar one with Mr. C. Kemble, who often seems

to have just arrived from a fatiguing walk. Mr. Mathews makes his appearance neither with this indifference on the one hand, nor on the other with that laboured mirth which seems to have been lashed into action like a top and which goes down like a top at regular intervals. If, therefore, he does not amaze like many inferior actors with sudden bursts of broad merriment, he is more equable and consistent in his humour and inspires his audience with a more constant spirit of cheerfulness. Such a cheerfulness is the most desirable effect in every comic performer, and this feeling is one of the sensations which render us more truly pleased with comedy than with farce: it is more agreeable to reason, because it leaves room for thinking; it is removed from violence, which always carries a degree of pain into the more exquisite pleasures; it is more like the happiness that we may attain in real life, and therefore more fitted to dispose us to an enjoyment of our feelings.

The principal fault in the general style of Mr. Mathews is a redundancy of bodily motion approaching to restlessness, which I have sometimes thought to have been a kind of nervousness impatient of public observation; but I think he has repressed this considerably within these few months, and if it be owing to want of confidence, the stage is not a place to increase any of the more bashful feelings. This fault, however, like Mr. Kemble's stiffness in *Penruddock*, becomes a beauty in his performance of the restless Lying Valet, and of Risk in *Love laughs at Locksmiths*, who are both in a perpetual bustle of cheating and contrivance. Possibly it may be the frequency of his performance in characters of intrigue that originally led him to indulge it, for there is yet another character, that of the intriguing servant in the farce of *Catch him who Can*, in which he is at full liberty to indulge it. In this servant he gives a specimen of that admirable power of mimicry, in which he rivals Mr. Bannister. I believe there were many in the theatre who had much difficulty to recognise him in his transformation into the Frenchman, and for alteration of manner, tone, and pronunciation it certainly was not inferior to the most finished deceptions of that great comedian. As this kind of deception indeed depends chiefly upon a disguise of the voice, one would imagine it ought not to be very difficult to an actor, one of whose first powers should be a flexibility of tone; but this flexibility becomes valuable on our stage for its rarity, for it is curious enough to observe, that we have not a single tragedian or female performer who can at all disguise the voice, and of all our

comedians, who really ought to excel in this point, Mr. Bannister and Mr. Mathews seems the only two who can thus escape from themselves with any artifice: many of the comic actors, as Munden, Simmons, Blanchard, Liston, Johnstone, Wewitzer, and particularly Fawcett, seem blessed with such honest throats as to be incapable of the slightest deception.

The old age of Mr. Mathews is like the rest of his excellences, perfectly unaffected and correct; the appearance of years he manages so well, that many of his admirers, who have never seen him off the stage, insist that he is an elderly man, and the reason of this deception is evident: most of our comedians in their representation of age either make no alteration of their voice, and like antiquarian cheats, palm a walking-stick or a hat upon us for something very ancient, or sink into so unnatural an imbecility that they are apt on occasion to forget their tottering knees and bent shoulders, and like Vertumnus in the poet are young and old in the turn of a minute. Mathews never appears to wish to be old; time seems to have come to him, not he to time, and as he never, where he can avoid it, makes that show of feebleness which the vanity of age always would avoid, so he never forgets that general appearance of years, which the natural feebleness of age could not help. Our old men of the stage are in general of one unvarying age in all their various characters, as in the case of Munden for instance, who though he imitates the appearance of a hearty old gentleman with much nature, is seldom a jot the older or the younger than his usual antiquity, whatever the author might have led us to imagine. The two characters of Don Manuel in *She Would and She Would Not* and of Old Philpot in the *Citizen* are sufficient examples of the ease with which Mr. Mathews alters his years and of the general excellences of his old age. In the former piece he is a naturally cheerful old man, whose humour depends much on the humour of others, and who is overcome alternately with gaiety and with despair, as he finds himself treated by those about him. The voice of Mr. Mathews, were we to shut our eyes, would be enough to convince us of his age in this character, and of his disposition too; there is something in it unaccountably petty and confined, while at the same time it appears to make an effort of strength and jollity, and when his false pitch of spirits meets with a sudden downfall, nothing can be more natural than the total dissolution of his powers of voice, or the restless despondency with which he yields himself to a hundred imaginary miseries: when his spirits are raised again

and his excessive joy gradually overcomes itself by its own violence, the second exertion of his fatigued talkativeness and of his excessive laughter reduces him to mere impotence; he sinks into his chair; and in the last weariness of a weak mind and body, cannot still refrain from the natural loquacity of old age, but in the intervals of oppressed feelings attempts to speak when he has not only nothing to say, but when it is perfectly painful to him to utter a word. In this character, therefore, Mr. Mathews exhibits all the gradations of the strength and weakness of declining years; in that of Philpot, he settles himself into a confirmed and unresisting old age: his feeble attitudes, his voice, his minutest actions, are perfectly monotonous, as become a money-getting dotard, whose soul is absorbed in one mean object; his limbs contracted together are expressive of the selfish closeness of the miser, and in his very tone of utterance, so sparing of its strength and so inward, he seems to retire into himself.

From the general performances however of Mr. Mathews, I had been induced to consider him as an actor of habits rather than of passions; and as the present essay originally stood, I had classed him in a rank much inferior to Bannister and Dowton. But one of his late performances raised his genius so highly in my estimation, that I cancelled the original paragraph on purpose to do justice to his Sir Fretful Plagiary in the *Critic*, to a performance which has proved his knowledge of the human heart, has given its true spirit to one of the most original characters of the first wit of our age, and has even persuaded the ancient dramatic connoisseurs to summon up the claps of former times: nay, some of the old gentlemen, in the important intervals of snuff, went so far as to declare that the actor approached Parsons himself. We are generally satisfied, when an actor can express a single feeling with strength of countenance; but to express two at once, and to give them at the same time a powerful distinctness, belongs to the perfection of his art. Nothing can be more admirable than the look of Mr. Mathews, when the severe criticism is detailed by his malicious acquaintance. While he affects a pleasantry of countenance, he cannot help betraying his rage in his eyes, in that feature which always displays our most predominant feelings: if he draws the air to and fro through his teeth, as if he was perfectly assured of his own pleasant feelings, he convinces everybody by his tremulous and restless limbs that he is in absolute torture; if the lower part of his face expands into a painful smile, the

upper part contracts into a glaring frown which contradicts the ineffectual good humour beneath; everything in his face becomes rigid, confused, and uneasy; it is a mixture of oil and vinegar, in which the acid predominates: it is anger putting on a mask that is only the more hideous in proportion as it is more fantastic. The sudden drop of his smile into a deep and bitter indignation, when he can endure sarcasm no longer, completes this impassioned picture of Sir Fretful; but lest his indignation should swell into mere tragedy, Mr. Mathews accompanies it with all the touches of familiar vexation: while he is venting his rage in vehement expressions, he accompanies his more emphatic words with a closing thrust of his buttons, which he fastens and unfastens up and down his coat; and when his obnoxious friend approaches his snuff-box to take a pinch, he claps down the lid and turns violently off with a most malicious mockery of grin. These are the performances and the characters, which are the true fame of actors and dramatists. If our farcical performers and farcical writers could reach this refined satire, ridicule would vanish before them, like breath from a polished knife.

RHYME AND REASON

OR A NEW PROPOSAL TO THE PUBLIC RESPECTING POETRY IN ORDINARY

A FRIEND of ours the other day, taking up the miscellaneous poems of Tasso, read the title-page into English as follows: "The Rhymes of the Lord Twisted Yew, Amorous, Bosky, and Maritime." [1] The Italians exhibit a modesty worthy of imitation in calling their Miscellaneous Poems, Rhymes. Twisted Yew himself, with all his genius, has put forth an abundance of these terminating blossoms, without any fruit behind them: and his countrymen of the present day do not scruple to confess, that their living poetry consists of little else. The French have a game at verses, called Rhymed Ends (*Bouts Rimés*) which they practise a great deal more than they are aware; and the English, though they are a more poetical people, and lay claim to the character of a less vain one, practise the same game to a very uncandid extent, without so much as allowing that the title is applicable to any part of it.

[1] Rime del Signor Torquato Tasso, Amorose, Boschereccie, Marittime, etc.

Yet how many "Poems" are there among all these nations, of which we require no more than the Rhymes, to be acquainted with the whole of them? You know what the rogues have done, by the ends they come to. For instance, what more is necessary to inform us of all which the following gentleman has for sale, than the bell which he tinkles at the end of his cry? We are as sure of him, as of the muffin man.

A Love Song

Grove	Heart	Kiss
Night	Prove	Blest
Rove	Impart	Bliss
Delight	Love	Rest

Was there ever peroration more eloquent? Ever a series of catastrophes more explanatory of their previous history? Did any Chinese gentleman ever show the amount of his breeding and accomplishments more completely, by the nails which he carries at his fingers' ends?

The Italian *rimatori* are equally comprehensive. We no sooner see the majority of their rhymes, than we long to save the modesty of their general pretensions so much trouble in making out their case. Their *cores* and *amores* are not to be disputed. Cursed is he that does not put implicit reliance upon their *fedeltà*!—that makes inquisition why the possessor *più superbo va*. They may take the oaths and their seat at once. For example—

Ben mio	Fuggito
Oh Dio	Repito
Per te	Da me

And again—

Amata
Sdegnata
Turbata
Irata
Furore
Dolore
Non so

With—

O cielo
Dal gielo
Tradire
Languire
Morire
Soffrire
Non può

Where is the dull and inordinate person that would require these rhymes to be filled up? If they are brief as the love of which they complain, are they not pregnant in conclusions, full of a world of things that have passed, infinitely retrospective, embracing, and enough? If not "vast," are they not "voluminous"?

It is doubtless an instinct of this kind that has made so many modern Italian poets intersperse their lyrics with those frequent single words, which are at once line and rhyme, and which some of our countrymen have in vain endeavoured to naturalise in the English opera. Not that they want the same pregnancy in our language, but because they are neither so abundant nor so musical; and besides, there is something in the rest of our verses, however commonplace, which seems to be laughing at the incursion of these vivacious strangers, as if it were a hop suddenly got up, and unseasonably. We do not naturally take to anything so abrupt and saltatory.

This objection, however, does not apply to the proposal we are about to make. Our rhymers *must* rhyme; and as there is a great difference between single words thus mingled with longer verses, and the same rhymes in their proper places, it has struck us, that a world of time and paper might be saved to the ingenious *rimatore*, whether Italian or English, by forgoing at once all the superfluous part of his verses; that is to say, all the rest of them; and confining himself, entirely, to these very sufficing terminations. We subjoin some specimens in the various kinds of poetry; and inform the intelligent bookseller that we are willing to treat with him for any quantity at a penny a hundred.

A Pastoral

Dawn	Each	Fair	Me	Ray
Plains	Spoke	Mine	Too	Heat
Lawn	Beech	Hair	Free	Play
Swains	Yoke	Divine	Woo	Sweet
Tune	Fields	Shades	Adieu	Farewell
Lays	Bowers	Darts	Flocks	Cows
Moon	Yields	Maids	Renew	Dell
Gaze	Flowers	Hearts	Rocks	Boughs

Here, without any more ado, we have the whole history of a couple of successful rural lovers comparing notes. They issue forth in the morning; fall into the proper place and dialogue; record the charms and kindness of their respective mistresses;

do justice at the same time to the fields and shades; and conclude by telling their flocks to wait as usual while they renew their addresses under the boughs. How easily is all this fathered from the rhymes; and how worse than useless would it be in two persons, who have such interesting avocations, to waste their precious time and the reader's in a heap of prefatory remarks, falsely called verses!

Of Love-songs we have already had specimens; and, by the by, we did not think it necessary to give any French examples of our involuntary predecessors in this species of writing. The *yeux* and *dangereux*, *moi* and *foi*, *charmes* and *larmes*, are too well-known as well as too numerous to mention. We proceed to lay before the reader a Prologue; which, if spoken by a pretty actress, with a due sprinkling of nods and becks, and a judicious management of the pauses, would have an effect equally novel and triumphant. The reader is aware that a Prologue is generally made up of some observations on the drama in general, followed by an appeal in favour of the new one, some compliments to the nation, and a regular climax in honour of the persons appealed to. We scarcely need observe, that the rhymes should be read slowly, in order to give effect to the truly understood remarks in the intervals.

PROLOGUE

Age	Fashion	Applause
Stage	British Nation	Virtue's Cause
Mind		
Mankind	Young	Trust
Face	Tongue	Just
Trace	Bard	Fear
Sigh	Reward	Here
Tragedy	Hiss	Stands
Scene	Miss	Hands
Spleen	Dare	True
Pit	British Fair	You
Wit		

Here we have some respectable observations on the advantages of the drama in every age, on the wideness of its survey, the different natures of tragedy and comedy, the vicissitudes of fashion, and the permanent greatness of the British Empire. Then the young bard, new to the dramatic art, is introduced. He disclaims all hope of reward for any merit of his own, except that which is founded on a proper sense of the delicacy and beauty of his fair auditors, and his zeal in the cause of virtue. To this, at all events, he is sure his critics will be just; and

though he cannot help feeling a certain timidity, standing where he does, yet upon the whole, as becomes an Englishman, he is perfectly willing to abide by the decision of his countrymen's hands, hoping that he shall be found

> . . . to sense, if not to genius true,
> And trusts his cause to virtue, and—to You.

Should the reader, before he comes to this explication of the Prologue, have had any other ideas suggested by it, we will undertake to say, that they will at all events be found to have a wonderful general similitude; and it is to be observed, that this very flexibility of adaptation is one of the happiest and most useful results of our proposed system of poetry. It comprehends all the possible commonplaces in vogue; and it also leaves to the ingenious reader something to fill up; which is a compliment that has always been held due to him by the best authorities.

The next specimen is what, in a more superfluous condition of metre, would have been entitled *Lines* on Time. It is much in that genteel didactic taste, which is at once thinking and non-thinking, and has a certain neat and elderly dislike of innovation in it, greatly to the comfort of the seniors who adorn the circles.

ON TIME

Time	Child	Race	Hold
Sublime	Beguiled	Trace	Old
Fraught	Boy	All	Sure
Thought	Joy	Ball	Endure
Power	Man	Pride	Death
Devour	Span	Deride	Breath
Rust	Sire	Aim	Forgiven
Dust	Expire	Same	Heaven
Glass		Undo	
Pass	So	New	
Wings	Go		
Kings			

We ask any impartial reader, whether he could possibly want a more sufficing account of the progress of this author's piece of reasoning upon Time? There is, first, the address to the hoary god, with all his emblems and consequence about him, the scythe excepted; that being an edge-tool to rhymers, which they judiciously keep inside the verse, as in a sheath. And then we are carried through all the stages of human existence, the caducity of which the writer applies to the world at large,

impressing upon us the inutility of hope and exertion, and suggesting of course the propriety of thinking just as he does upon all subjects, political and moral, past, present, and to come.

ON THE TALKING OF NONSENSE

THERE is no greater mistake in the world than the looking upon every sort of nonsense as want of sense. Nonsense in the bad sense of the word, like certain suspicious ladies, is very fond of bestowing its own appellation,—particularly upon what renders other persons agreeable. But nonsense, in the good sense of the word, is a very sensible thing in its season; and is only confounded with the other by people of a shallow gravity, who cannot afford to joke.

These gentlemen live upon credit, and would not have it inquired into. They are perpetual beggars of the question. They are grave, not because they think, or feel the contrast of mirth, for then they would feel the mirth itself; but because gravity is their safest mode of behaviour. They must keep their minds sitting still, because they are incapable of a motion that is not awkward. They are waxen images among the living;—the deception is undone, if the others stir;—or hollow vessels covered up, which may be taken for full ones:—the collision of wit jars against them, and strikes out their hollowness.

In fact, the difference between nonsense not worth talking, and nonsense worth it, is simply this:—the former is the result of a want of ideas, the latter of a superabundance of them. This is remarkably exemplified by Swift's *Polite Conversation*, in which the dialogue, though intended to be a tissue of the greatest nonsense in request with shallow merriment, is in reality full of ideas, and many of them very humorous; but then they are all commonplace, and have been said so often, that the thing uppermost in your mind is the inability of the speakers to utter a sentence of their own;—they have no ideas at all. Many of the jokes and similes in that treatise are still the current coin of the shallow; though they are now pretty much confined to gossips of an inferior order, and the upper part of the lower classes.

On the other hand, the wildest rattling, as it is called, in which men of sense find entertainment, consists of nothing but

a quick and original succession of ideas,—a finding as it were, of something in nothing,—a rapid turning of the hearer's mind to some new face of thought and sparkling imagery. The man of shallow gravity, besides an uneasy half-consciousness that he has nothing of the sort about him, is too dull of perception to see the delicate links between one thought and another; and he takes that for a mere chaos of laughing jargon, in which finer apprehensions perceive as much delightful association, as men of musical taste do in the most tricksome harmonies and accompaniments of Mozart or Beethoven. Between such gravity and such mirth, there is as much difference as between the driest and dreariest psalmody, and that exquisite laughing trio,—"E voi ridete,"—which is sung in *Così Fan Tutte*. A quaker's coat and a garden are not more dissimilar;—nor a death-bell and the birds after a sunny shower.

It is on such occasions indeed that we enjoy the perfection of what is agreeable in humanity,—the harmony of mind and body,—intellect, and animal spirits. Accordingly, the greatest geniuses appear to have been proficients in this kind of nonsense, and to have delighted in dwelling upon it, and attributing it to their favourites. Virgil is no joker, but Homer is; and there is the same difference between their heroes, Æneas and Achilles, the latter of whom is also a player on the harp. Venus, the most delightful of the goddesses, is Philommeides, the laughter-loving;—an epithet, by the by, which might give a good hint to a number of very respectable ladies, "who love their lords," but who are too apt to let ladies less respectable run away with them. Horace represents Pleasantry as fluttering about Venus in company with Cupid,—

Quem *Jocus* circumvolat, et Cupido;

and these are followed by Youth, the enjoyer of animal spirits, and by Mercury, the god of persuasion. There is the same difference between Tasso and Ariosto as between Virgil and Homer; that is to say, the latter proves his greater genius by a completer and more various hold on the feelings, and has not only a fresher spirit of nature about him, but a truer, because a happier; for the want of this enjoyment is at once a defect and a deterioration. It is more or less a disease of the blood;—a falling off from the pure and uncontradicted blithesomeness of childhood; a hampering of the mind with the altered nerves;—dust gathered in the watch, and perplexing our passing hours.

It may be thought a begging of the question to mention

Anacreon, since he made an absolute business of mirth and enjoyment, and sat down systematically to laugh as well as to drink. But on that very account, perhaps, his case is still more in point; and Plato, one of the gravest, but not the shallowest, of philosophers, gave him the title of the Wise. The disciple of Socrates appears also to have been a great enjoyer of Aristophanes; and the divine Socrates himself was a wit and a joker.

But the divine Shakespeare;—the man to whom we go for everything, and are sure to find it, grave, melancholy, or merry, —what said he to this exquisite kind of nonsense? Perhaps next to his passion for detecting nature, and over-informing it with poetry, he took delight in pursuing a joke; and the lowest scenes of his in this way say more to men whose faculties are fresh about them, and who prefer enjoyment to criticism, than the most doting of commentators can find out. They are instances of his animal spirits,—of his sociality,—of his passion for giving and receiving pleasure,—of his enjoyment of something wiser than wisdom.

The greatest favourites of Shakespeare are made to resemble himself in this particular. Hamlet, Mercutio, Touchstone, Jaques, Richard the Third, and Falstaff, "inimitable Falstaff," are all men of wit and humour, modified according to their different temperaments or circumstances,—some from health and spirits, others from sociality, others from a contrast with their very melancholy. Indeed melancholy itself, with the profoundest intellects, will rarely be found to be anything else than a sickly temperament, induced, or otherwise, preying in its turn upon the disappointed expectations of pleasure,— upon the contradiction of hopes, which this world is not made to realise, though (let us never forget) it is made, as they themselves prove, to suggest. Some of Shakespeare's characters, as Mercutio and Benedick, are almost entirely made up of wit and animal spirits; and delightful fellows they are; and ready, from their very taste, to perform the most serious and manly offices. Most of his women too have an abundance of natural vivacity. Desdemona herself is so pleasant of intercourse in every way, that upon the principle of the respectable mistakes above-mentioned, the Moor, when he grows jealous, is tempted to think it a proof of her want of honesty. But we must make Shakespeare speak for himself, or we shall not know how to be silent on this subject. What a description is that which he gives of a man of mirth,—of a mirth, too, which he has expressly

stated to be within the limit of what is becoming? It is in *Love's Labour's Lost*:

> A merrier man,
> Within the limit of becoming mirth,
> I never spent an hour's talk withal,
> His eye begets occasion for his wit:
> For every object that the one doth catch,
> The other turns to a mirth-moving jest;
> Which his fair tongue, conceit's expositor,
> Delivers in such apt and gracious words,
> That aged ears play truant at his tales,
> And younger hearings are quite ravished;
> So sweet and voluble is his discourse.

We have been led into these reflections, partly to introduce the conclusion of this article,—partly from being very fond of a joke ourselves, and so making our self-love as proud as possible,—and partly from having spent some most agreeable hours the other evening with a company, the members of which had all the right to be grave and disagreeable that rank and talent are supposed to confer, and yet from the very best sense or forgetfulness of both, were as lively and entertaining to each other as boys. Not one of them perhaps but had his cares,—one or two, of no ordinary description; but what then? These are the moments, if we can take advantage of them, when sorrows are shared, even unconsciously;—moments, when melancholy intermits her fever, and hope takes a leap into enjoyment;—when the pilgrim of life, if he cannot lay aside his burden, forgets it in meeting his fellows about a fountain; and soothes his weariness and his resolution with the sparkling sight, and the noise of the freshness.

To come to our anticlimax, for such we are afraid it must be called after all this grave sentiment and mention of authorities. The following dialogue is the substance of a joke (never meant for its present place) that was started the other day upon a late publication. The name of the book it is not necessary to mention, especially as it was pronounced to be one of the driest that had appeared for years. We cannot answer for the sentences being put to their proper speakers. The friends, whom we value most, happen to be great hunters in this way; and the reader may look upon the thing as a specimen of a joke run down, or of the sort of nonsense above mentioned; so that he will take due care how he professes not to relish it. We must also advertise him, that a proper quantity of giggling and laughter must be supposed to be interspersed, till towards the end it gradually becomes too great to go on with.

A. Did you ever see such a book?

B. Never, in all my life. It's as dry as a chip.

A. As a chip? A chip's a slice of orange to it.

B. Ay, or a wet sponge.

A. Or a cup in a currant tart.

B. Ah, ha; so it is. You feel as if you were fingering a brick-bat.

A. It makes you feel dust in the eyes.

B. It is impossible to shed a tear over it. The lachrymal organs are dried up.

A. If you shut it hastily, it is like clapping together a pair of fresh-cleaned gloves.

B. Before you have got far in it, you get up to look at your tongue in a glass.

A. It absolutely makes you thirsty.

B. Yes:—if you take it up at breakfast, you drink four cups instead of two.

A. At page 30 you call for beer.

B. They say it made a Reviewer take to drinking.

A. They have it lying on the table at inns to make you drink double. The landlord says, "A new book, Sir," and goes out to order two neguses.

B. It dries up everything so, it has ruined the draining business.

A. There is an Act of Parliament to forbid people's passing a vintner's with it in their pockets.

B. The Dutch subscribed for it to serve them instead of dykes.

A TREATISE ON DEVILS

It is much easier to conceive a good spirit than a bad one, not only because the latter is useless and his sufferings absurd (nature refusing to allow of suffering beyond a certain pitch, and no infliction of ill warranting or making reasonable a further and worse infliction, except for the good of all parties), but because malignity, which is a devil's characteristic, and which is understood to mean the love of injuring another for the injury's sake, is found, upon a due knowledge of evil and its causes, to be a thing altogether fictitious and impossible. The worst of men does not injure another because, abstractedly,

he would do him a mischief, but in order to get rid of some pressure of evil upon himself. Take the envious man, the revengeful, the murderer for the sake of gain,—or what seems worst of all, the murderer for the sake of murder—and, tracing the causes of his offence with a humane and a thoughtful eye, we shall find it is out of some imaginary disadvantage, some sense of infelicity or inequality, or some morbid want of excitement, frightening the poor inconsiderate wretch himself even more than he frightens others, that induces him, under the notion or the impulse of procuring relief to his own desires, to thrust his evil upon the head of another. And the worse and more wicked we could suppose a creature to be, the more (not to speak it profanely) would be his excuse; because the more dreadful would be the disadvantage under which he lay, the more tormenting his infelicity, and the more grievous (if it could never be made smooth for him) his wrong. Pain, like a heap of brambles, shows us our departure from a right path; and melancholy it seems that pain should be necessary, even supposing it to exist only in the younger period or first renewals of a world, after some catastrophe interrupting its bliss, and before the new wilderness can be cleared; but as all evils are not so evil as we suppose them, so we know from all that we *can* know (and nothing gives us a right to pronounce further, especially in contumely of what is good) that the worst evils are fugitive and the greatest crimes are mistakes. For all these reasons (the world feeling them more and more as it grows enlightened), there comes up by degrees a suspicion that it is better to say as little as possible, in a serious way, of such anomalies as devils:—in a little while people are allowed to doubt them, then to laugh at them, and finally, except among the grossly ignorant or superstitious, devils remain fit subjects for nothing but jests and caricature, and the voluntary gravity of the black-lettered.

As to those writers and others, who continue to preach a doctrine which they despise, out of a notion that the delusion is necessary to mankind,—that men are so wicked as to require terrors to keep them in awe,—and other half reasonings of that sort, it is a great presumption in them, in the first place, to assume a privilege of exemption from those duties of veracity to which they would fain tie the rest of the world; and, secondly, they harm their own natures by it, and maintain themselves in an ill opinion of the world in which they take themselves to be the wisest persons. They rule it (as they think) by falsehood, and yet are weak enough to lament that it is as bad and false as

it is, and a "vale of tears." Now, the world is neither so bad nor so unhappy as many suppose it, though, assuredly, there is sorrow enough in it to make us anxious to wipe the tears out of its eyes; but this is not to be done by the use of the very falsehood we lament, by adding to what is already evil in the world,—melancholy and perplexing ideas of things beyond it, and all this at a time when, the delusion being discovered, the signal is given for its destruction. As men, let us think none of us exempt from the virtues and sincerity of men; nor, by taking ourselves for the gods of the foolish, imagine we must have devils to keep the peace for us. Truth will do very well without them, if we suffer it to take its course. Are we to suppose ourselves better and wiser than all which it may find out for us? Who has given us the clew to discover *that*?

With regard to the existence of one supreme devil, or conscious and wilful Principle of Evil (which has been doubted by the most orthodox, upon a due consideration of texts and Scripture),[1] it is not only contradictory to the received opinions respecting the omnipotence and beneficence of the Deity, but is a superfluity in common reasoning; for as it is a maxim in logic, that when anything can be accounted for on one principle, it need not have recourse to another, and as it ought equally to be a maxim in common sense to choose the more agreeable principle of the two, it is much better to refer the origin of evil to that inert and insensible part of matter of which Plato speaks, and the hardness of which causes a difficulty in the working it, than to set up, for the amusement of sluggish imaginations, the terrors of feeble ones, and the poor views of the worldly, a gratuitous malignant spirit, equally absurd whether we consider the attributes of God or the necessities of common reason. And herein the celebrated living writer, who is as delightful in

[1] As in the very word *devil*, which is a translation of the Testament, is assumed to be the meaning of the Greek word *diabolos*, though the letters signify an *accuser*, and admirably fit the passage in that sense. For instance,—"Be sober, be vigilant," says the Apostle, "for your adversary the *accuser* walks about, seeking whom he may devour." What can be better than this construction, or more natural in addressing a letter to an infant community, bound to be on their good behaviour? and why should the word be translated *devil*? So in the famous passage in Isaiah, where the King of Babylon is so nobly apostrophised under the title of Lucifer, or the light-bringer, son of the morning. Why should this be tortured into a prophecy of the devil, and the morning star be made synonymous with an imaginary infernal being? It appears to us that a book written expressly on the subject, with the proper requisites of learning and philosophy, might now settle the pretensions of this infernal personage forever. We should envy the composer of such a work, and would do our utmost to second his benefaction to mankind.

fiction as he appears shallow in philosophy, and who has addressed a book to a little child in which he condescends to preach the horrible doctrine of hell torments, ought, we think, to have a deep sense of his shame and humiliation: for it is either a great weakness in him or a great insincerity. He says, in the preface to one of his novels, with an escape of cunning, brought upon him by the mortified vanity of a failure, that he will never go counter to public opinion; or, to use his own words, will never "sail against the stream." We need not say whether it is becoming in a man of genius to talk in this manner, for whatever reason; but it is one thing not to sail against the stream, and another to go down with it in the company of the small craft of ignorance and hypocrisy. Imagination, however, carries a blessing with it in its own despite; and the magic vessel, in this instance, while the captain is thinking of nothing but the flag he has hoisted in favour of old prejudices, has a stock of humanities on board that shall still benefit the world.

It hardly need be observed, at this time of day, that Milton's devil is no real devil, any more than his divinity is really divine. The divine things in *Paradise Lost* are the poetry and the humanity. As far as his devil partakes of these, the devil himself becomes divine; and as far as his Deity wants them, we feel that nothing can be flatter or more ungodly. Milton laughed at the vulgar idea of the devil, and disdained to degrade his fallen Archangel into horns and a tail. Had he delayed writing his poem some years longer, there is reason to believe that he would have disdained to degrade his Deity into a "school divine"[1] and a sorry tyrant, or to think that spirits in a state of perfect bliss and virtue could fall.[2] Such a god is not the natural God of a great poet; and from some remarkable evidences, not only in his later works, but that transpired on proving of his

[1] And God the Father turns a school-divine.—POPE.

[2] "What to me is more wonderful," says the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, "and which, I think, will be very ill accounted for, is: How came seeds of crime to rise in the angelic nature, created in a state of perfect, unspotted holiness? How was it first found in a place where no unclean thing can enter? How came ambition, pride, or envy to generate there? Could there be offence where there was no crime? Could untainted purity breed corruption? Could that nature contaminate and infect which was always drinking in principles of perfection?

"Happy it is to me that writing the history, not solving the difficulties of Satan's affairs, is my province in this work: that I am to relate fact, not give reasons for it or assign causes: if it was otherwise, I should break off at this difficulty, for I acknowledge I do not see through it: neither do I think that the great Milton, after all his fine images and lofty excursions upon the subject, has left it one jot clearer than he found it."—*History of the Devil*, p. 41, edit. 1777.

will, it appears certain that he retired more and more from the vulgarities that had been palmed upon his infancy into the sacred recesses of his own thought, and found there no longer an unworthy deity. He had "edified" a chapel to himself;[1] and the music of his own organ now ascended into a nobler sky, giving to his sightless eyeballs a right to look tranquil.

No; the only genuine devil now extant is the proper old woman's devil, with horns and a tail, and he begins exceedingly

To pale his ineffectual fire.

The old women themselves desert him. He loses his believers by wholesale; is a very sorry and poor devil, and people quote Burns, and wish him out of his durance. Formerly he was identified with emperors and archangels; he was called the Prince of the Air; he had all the spirits of the terrestrial world given him for subjects; the whole Pagan mythology was turned over to him, and when gods were forgotten, devils were made out of the fairies. He is now "himself alone," deprived of his property, like Job, and sits amidst the ashes of his ruin in shabby misery. He has lost even his power to joke, which was one of the ghastliest things about him. He no longer laughs, and says, *Ho! Ho!* like another Henry the Eighth. He has nothing to say it for. If he is still black as a coal, with talons and saucer eyes, he is also lean as a rake; no longer fat, as when he used to have those delicious dinners with the old wives, like a favoured Methodist parson. His talons are of no use to him but to serve him like Job's; and his saucer eyes now, indeed, for the first time,

Witness huge affliction and dismay,

rolling about like a starved owl's in a trap, who has been caught there at noonday.

Formerly he and his ministers were everywhere round about us, tempting us to ill, doing us all sorts of mischief, and laughing at it, and now and then raising storms of wind and rain, and thunder and lightning (which, not having been to school, they did not know were good things for us). The powers granted him were no less prodigious than odd. If you wished anything at the devil, he took it. He disputed possession of you with your good angel; and a silly old woman, in whom indigestion confounded dreaming with waking, and who went flying on the wings of her head vapours, had the power of making him a

[1] A littel wyde
There was an holy chappel edifyde.—SPENSER.

present of an immortal soul. What is more extraordinary, and shows us the danger of giving an inch of ground to assumptions and things unproved, is, that old women, both male and female, having much to do with education, they habituated some of the most exalted understandings to believe in these rascalities of superstition, and we should infallibly have all believed in them to this day had not the excess of the demand upon their credulity in some other matters roused men of spirit and genius to vindicate the invaluable right of doubting and inquiring, some of them (Luther for one) being all the while fastened with the grossest chains of superstition by the one hand, while they wrote against them triumphantly with the other. Let us be modest when we think of these things, but do not let us prove our modesty by adhering to errors upon which we have been enlightened. Let us reflect, rather, upon how many points we may still be mistaken, and resolve to carry on the good work of improvement in which those illustrious men set us so noble an example.

We lay before our readers some amusing extracts from an old writer, both serious and comic, which will show them what was thought of devils by the contemporaries of Shakespeare. Not that *he* believed in any such nonsense, though he knew how to turn the poetical parts of it to account; and in matters of speculation, as well as practice, was doubtless the most undogmatical of men. He and the other great poets of that time were accused of being exceedingly sceptical, and there is evidence in them to show that, in a proper sense of the word, the opinion was true. We do not make an exception of old Heywood, who was author of some beautiful simple dramas, and from whom the chief number of extracts are taken: for though a touching writer he was little of a poet. He had great feeling, but no imagination; and it is not paradoxical to affirm that if he had finer eyes for fiction, he would have seen farther into truth. And so it is, vice versa, of the mechanical philosophers. But to the passages in question. The first is very ghastly, on account of the quiet familiarity of shape in which the alleged devil makes her *entrée*. This is a great secret in horrid stories.

In the easterne part of Russia [saith Heywood], about harvest time, a spirit was seen to walk at midday, like a sad, mourning widow; and whosoever she met, if they did not instantly fall on their knees to adore her, they could not part with her without a leg or an arm broken, or some other as great mischiefe.—*Hierarchie of Angels.*

The chief of these noon-devils, according to the Rabbis, is

a very singular personage. He has a head like that of a calf, with a horn shooting out of his forehead; is all over ox's hair, full of eyes, and *rolls along like a tub*.[1] We shall take this opportunity of observing that, according to the Jews, all male devils have plenty of hair on their heads, while, on the contrary, female devils are bald. This is the reason, they say, why Boaz laid his hand on the head of Ruth. It was in order to assure himself that he had not a female devil in his chamber.[2] With us the shock would be great, but we should certainly acquit the lady of enchantment. No Christian would say, "Eh, you little devil!" to a girl with a bald head.

A Story out of Niderius

Niderius telleth this story: In the borders of the kingdom of Bohemia lieth a valley, in which divers nights together was heard clattering of armour and clamours of men, as two armies had met together in picht battel. Two knights that inhabited near unto this prodigious place agreed to arm themselves and discover the secrets of this invisible army. The night was appointed, and, accommodated at all assayes, they rode to the place, where they might descry two battels ready ordered for present skirmish; they could easily distinguish the colours and prevant liveries of every company; but drawing neere, the one (whose courage began to relent) told the other that he had seene sufficient for his part, and thought it good not to dally with such prodigies; wherefore, farther than he was, he would not go. The other called him coward, and prickt on towards the armies, from one of which a horseman came forth, fought with him, and cut off his head. At which sight the other fled, and told the sight the next morning. A great confluence of people, searching for the body, found it in one place, and the head in another; but neither could discern the footing of horse or man, only the print of birds' feet, and those in miry places.—*Hierarchie of Angels.*

This reminds us of the Tempter's Feast, in Milton, which vanishes,

> With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard.[3]

Birds' and goats' feet were thought to be unalterable accompaniments of devils, and rendered the boldest of them coy in their extremities.

The following illustration, out of Heywood, of the promptitude of devils to avail themselves of any expression in their favour

[1] *Rabbinical Literature*, vol. ii, p. 118. [2] Ibid., p. 104.

[3] *Paradise Regained*, Bk. II, l. 403. Warton observes upon this passage, "that the sound of the wings and talons is much finer than if the harpies had been seen, because the imagination is left at work, and the surprise is greater than if they had been mentioned before."

is one of the best stories about them we ever read. The reason is, that it is domestic, and touches upon the affections. The peril of the innocent and unconscious child in the hands of the swarthy visitors, furnishes a striking picture of contrast.

The Black Dinner

In Silesia, a nobleman having invited many guests to dinner, and prepared a liberal and costly feast for their entertainment, when all things were in great forwardness, instead of his friends whom he expected, he only received excuses from them that they could not keep his appointment. Whereat the inviter, being horribly vexed, broke out into these words, saying, "Since all these men have thus failed me, I wish that so many devils of hell would feast with me to-day, and eat up the victuals provided for them"; and so in a great rage left the house, and went to church, where was that day a sermon; his attention to which having tooke away the greatest part of his choler, in the interim there arrived at his house a great troupe of horsemen, very blacke, and of extraordinary aspect and stature: who, alighting in the court, called to a groome to take their horses, and bade another servant run presently to his master and tell him his guests were come. The servant, amazed, runneth to church, and with that short breath and little sense he had left, delivers to his master what had happened. The lord calls to the preacher, and desiring him for that time to break off his sermon, and advise him by his ghostly counsel what was best to doe in so strict an exigent, hee persuades him, that all his servants should with what speed they can depart the house. In the mean time, they, with the whole congregation, come within view of the mansion: of which all his servants, as well men as maids, had with great affright delivered themselves, and for haste forgotten and left behind a young child, the nobleman's sonne, sleeping in his cradle. By this the devils were revelling in the dining-chamber, making a great noise, as if they had saluted and welcomed one another: and looked through the casements, one with the head of a beare, another a wolfe, a third a cat, a fourth a tygre, etc., filling bowls and quaffing as if they had drunke to the master of the house. By this time the nobleman, seeing all his servants safe, began to remember his sonne, and asked them "what had become of the child"? These words were scarce spoke, when one of the devils had him in his arms, and showed him out of the window. The good man of the house at this sight being almost without life, spying an old faithful servant of his, fetched a deep sighe, and said, "O me, what shall become of the infant!" The servant, seeing his master in that sad extasie, replied, "Sir, by God's help I will enter the house, and fetch the childe out of the power of yon devils, or perish with him." To whom the master said, "God prosper thy attempts, and strengthen thee in thy purpose." Whereon, having taken a blessing from the priest, he enters the house, and coming into the next room where the devils were then rioting, he fell upon his knees, and commended himself to the protection of heaven. Then pressing

in amongst them, he beheld them in their horrible shapes, some sitting, some walking, some standing. Then they all came about him at once, and asked him what business he had there. He, in a great sweat and agonie (yet resolved in his purpose), came to that spirit which held the infant, and said, "In the name of God, deliver this child to mee." Who answered, "No, but let thy master come and fetch him, who hath most interest in him." The servant replied, "I am come to do that office and service which God hath called me, by virtue of which, and by his power, loe, I seize upon the innocent: and snatching him from the divell, took him in his arms and carried him out of the roome. At which they clamoured and called after, "Ho, thou knave, ho, thou knave, leave the childe to us, or we will teare thee in pieces." But he, unterrified with their diabolical menaces, brought away the infant, and delivered it safe to the father. After some few daies the spirits left the house, and the lord re-entered into his antient possession. In this discourse is to be observed, with what familiaritie these Familiar Spirits are ready to come, being invited.—*Hierarchie of Angels.*

Chaucer has a pleasant story to similar purpose, which is too long to repeat: but we cannot resist giving an abstract. A summoner (a bailiff of the ecclesiastical court) riding out on his vacation, overtakes a yeoman under the trees, in a green cloak, also on horseback. He bids him good-morrow, and the yeoman asks him whether he means to go far that day.

> This sompnour him answered, and said, "Nay:—
> Here, fast by," quoth he, "is mine intent
> To riden, for to raisen up a rent,
> That longeth to my lord his duety."
> "Ah! art thou then a bailiff?" quoth he
> (He durst not, for very filth and shame,
> Say that he was a sompnour for the name),
> "*De par Dieux!*" quoth this yeoman, "leve brother,
> Thou art a bailiff, and I'm another."

The two horsemen get social, and the summoner asks the yeoman where he lives, in order that he may know how to find him. The yeoman "in soft speech," tells him that he lives "far in the North Countree" (the supposed quarter of the devils): and adds, that he hopes to see him there shortly, and will give him such directions as he cannot possibly miss.

After comparing notes, and agreeing that it is idle to have a conscience, the sompnour, who is very curious, requests to know his fellow's name.

> This yeoman gan a little for to smile;
> "Brother," quoth he, "wilt thou that I thee tell?
> *I am a fiend; my dwelling is in hell;*
> And here ride I about my purchasing,
> To wot whether men *will give me anything.*"

"Benedicite!" cries the sompnour; "what say ye?"—The frightened church officer recovers himself, and after some conversation, they agree to stand by one another in their callings. The yeoman is to take whatever people give to him; the summoner what he can get; and if there is an overplus on either side, they are to share it.

They come into a town, where a carman is swearing at his horses for not getting on with a load of hay:

> Heit, Scot! heit, Brock! what, spare ye for the stones!
> The fiend (quoth he) you fetch, body and bones:
> The dev'l have all, both horse, and cart, and hay.

The summoner wonders that his friend does not take the man at his word, and seize on the team; but the devil tells him that he does not mean what he says, as he will see presently.

> This carter thwacketh his horse, upon the croup,
> And they began to drawer and to stoop,
> Heit, now! (quoth he) there—Jesus Christ you bless,
> And all his handy work, both more and less!
> That was well twitch'd, mine own liard [1] boy:
> I pray God save thy body, and Saint Eloy.

"There," said the devil, "you see!"—The companions quit the town, and arrive at the hut of a poor widow, against whom the summoner has a warrant. He agrees to compound the matter, if she will give him twelve pence (a good sum in those days): the poor woman protests that she could not raise such a sum in the whole world: the summoner gets enraged, says he will take away her "new pan," and calls her names: upon which the woman gets angry in turn, and wishes him at the devil.

> "Unto the devil, rough and black of hue,
> Give I thy body, and my pan also."
> And when the devil heard her cursen so
> Upon her knees, he said in this mannère:
> "Now, Mabily, mine own mother dear;
> Is this your will in earnest that ye say?"
> "The devil," quoth she, "so fetch him ere the day
> And pan and all, but he will him repent."
> "Nay, old stot, that is not mine intent,"
> Quoth this sompnour, "for to repenten me
> For anything that I have had of thee:
> I would I had thy smock and every cloth."
> "Now, brother," quoth the devil, "be not wroth:
> Thy body and this pan be mine by right,
> Thou shalt with me to hellè yet to-night,
> Where thou shall knowen of our privity
> More than a master of divinity"
> And with that word the foule fiend him hent:
> Body and soule he with the devil went.

[1] Liard, a name for a grey horse.

The devils formerly in request may be divided into ten classes: First, the old Oracular Devil, or Devil Pagan, who took upon himself to be Apollo or Jupiter, and is said to have occupied the shrines of those deities; an opinion which good old Plutarch (who was, in fact, the Reverend Mr. Plutarch, clergyman at Delphos) would have thought a blasphemy too horrible to be endured.

Second, the Devil Vagabond, just mentioned, who went about seeking what he might devour, from a summoner down to a saucepan. He has since turned out to be a common shoplifter or thief; that is, when he takes a saucepan; when he takes a summoner, he is an apoplexy.

Third, the Possessing Devil, or Devil of the Exorcist, who was fond of inhabiting people's bodies, and made himself famous among the nuns. This turned out to be the chaplain.

Fourth, the Amatory Devil, or Incubus, who partook of the nature of the second, and who, according to Chaucer, had disappeared in his time, being displaced by the Friar; at which period perhaps the word Incubus was first rendered Incumbent. He is still clerical sometimes, but oftener a layman; and may be seen haunting milliners' apprentices down Regent Street, in the likeness of a foolish youth; or standing at a tavern door, sly and stupid, eyeing the women's ankles as they pass. He is also the Nightmare.

Fifth, the Devil Grim, or General Devil, who appeared in a proper diabolical shape, or was at least black and swarthy, and often went in a company, as may be seen in the story of the Black Dinner. He has totally disappeared.

Sixth, the House Devil, or Devil Pranksome, with whom the Fairies were confounded. He was a minor kind of class the second, and contented himself with knocking and making a noise, displacing furniture, and making the good people "knowe not what to think." He has been discovered to be a maid-servant.

Seventh, the Wayside, or Out-of-Door Devil, also confounded with Fairies. He was a kind of Satyr.—"They sit," quoth Burton, "by the highway side, to give men falls, and make their horses stumble and start as they ride (if you will believe the relation of that holy man Ketellus, in Nubrigensis, that had an especial grace to see devils). . . . If a man curse or spur his horse for stumbling, they do heartily rejoice at it; with many such pretty feats." [1]

Eighth, the Necromancer's or Astrologer's Devil, who came

[1] *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Pt. I, sect. 2.

up when he was called by art; explained the mysteries of the universe; was a great statesman; and promised riches and power. Some of his tribe (to use the libellous language of those days) were "mighty Dukes" and "Princes," having brute heads, and riding on horseback.[1]

Ninth, the Attendant Devil, or Familiar, who was of various degrees of rank, from the accomplished imps that waited on Faustus and Agrippa, down to the cat of the old crone. See Goethe's and Marlowe's tragedies, and *The Witch* of Middleton.

Tenth and last, the Devil Proper, or devil himself, the Apollyon of John Bunyan. He was "the black man" of the nursery and the coal-hole; and used to be called upon to take away children or swallow them up.[2] To his friends the witches, he used to appear either as a satyr or sort of clergyman, in black clothes, very reverend, dressed as it were for the evening. But his proper establishment consisted of a tail with a sting to it, "horns on his head, fire in his mouth, eyes like a bason, fangs like a dog, claws like a bear, a skin like a *nigger*, and a voice roaring like a lion; whereby (quoth Reginald Scot), we start and are afraid when we hear one cry *Bough*."[3] A facetious churchman, being asked why the devil took such a strange liking to old women, quoted a passage, in which it had been

[1] See Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, p. 229.

"Their first and principal king (which is of the power of the East) is called *Baell*; who, when he is conjured up, appeareth with three heads; the first like a toad, the second like a man, the third like a cat; he speaketh with a hoarse voice. He maketh a man to go invisible: he hath under his obedience and rule sixty and six legions of devils.

"The first duke under the power of the East is named *Agares*. He cometh up mildly in the likeness of a fair old man" (there is something striking in this) "riding upon a crocodile, and carrying a hawk on his fist. He has under him thirty-one legions.

"*Valefer*, *alias* Malephar, is a strong duke, cometh forth in the shape of a lion and *the head of a thief*. He is very familiar with them to whom he maketh himself acquainted, till he hath brought them to the gallows; he ruleth ten legions.

"*Furfur* is a great earl, appearing as an hart with a fiery tail. He lieth in everything.

"*Furcas* is a knight, and cometh forth in the similitude of a cruel man, with a long beard and hoary head. He sitteth on a pale horse.

"*Gamigin* is a great marquess, and is seen in the form of a little horse.

"Another marquess is a liar and a horse-stealer. '*Zepar*, a great duke,' makes women incontinent and barren. *Berith* is a 'great and a terrible duke,' and 'also a liar.'"

[2] According to the author of *Malleus Maleficarum*, and "the residue of that crew," says Scot, in speaking of the etymology of the word devil, "*Dia* is *Duo* and *Bolus* is *Morcellus*; whereby they gather, that the devil eateth up a man, body and soul, at two morsels."—*A Discourse concerning Devils and Spirits*, Bk. I, chap. xxxii.

[3] *Discovery of Witchcraft*, p. 85.

said of him, that he "loved to walk in dry places." Another wag, undertaking to show the people the devil himself, "to the satisfaction," as Swift terms it, "of the beholders," held out to them an *empty purse*! A solider account of him has never been given. An Italian poet makes mention of a devil who dwelt in the smoke of roast meat.[1]

Before the devil's existence was denied people began to perceive that considerable doubts might be entertained as to the extent of his operations, and how far King James and others had a right to palm upon him the offences of their "corrupted flesh." [2] We speak in courts of law of criminals

[1] Berni, *Orlando Innamorato*, Canto li, st. 49. For a thorough knowledge of devils and all that has been said of them, the curious reader may consult *Glanville on Witches*, *Wierus De Præstigiis Dæmonum*, Stehelin's *Rabbinical Literature*, the *Lives of the Saints*, and above all, Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, the title of which ought to be given at large to do honour to the writer who could produce such a work at a period so early: for it was printed in 1584. But the sapient Scotch monarch had not then come to England to encourage people to be as sottish and half-witted as himself. Scot's book is entitled "The Discovery of Witchcraft,—proving that the compacts and contracts of witches with devils and all infernal spirits or familiars are but erroneous novelties and imaginary conceptions, etc. Wherein likewise the unchristian practices and inhumane dealings of searchers and witch-tryers, upon aged, melancholy, and superstitious people, in extorting confessions by terrors and tortures, and inedevising false marks and symptoms, are notably detected; and the knavery of jugglers, conjurers, charmers, soothsayers, figure-casters, etc., fully opened and decyphered; all which are very necessary to be known for the undeceiving of judges, justices, and jurors, before they pass sentence upon poor miserable and ignorant people: who are frequently consigned, condemned, and executed for witches and wizards." It was avowedly to confute these "damnable opinions," as he calls them, that King James wrote his *Demonologie*. Reginald Scot was a learned and spirited English gentleman, one of the most worthy of that title that ever existed, and ought to be held in eternal honour by those who feel interested in the cause of humanity. Think of a king putting forth the strength of his authority amidst bowing courtiers and churchmen, in order to retain a superstition by which it has been calculated that *twenty thousand people were burnt in the course of one hundred and fifty years*; and then figure to yourself this gallant English gentleman (whose book it is said was burnt by the hangman) disdaining in secret these attempts of the royal driveller, and looking forward to a time when his book would be quoted in favour of common sense and feeling, and with the gratitude of posterity. We should take care to bear the names of such men in golden preservation; for it is sometimes the lot of the most precious labours to become obsolete and unremembered by reason of the very good they have done us. We are too apt to fancy, that what is a commonplace to us, was the same to our benefactors.

[2] *Demonologie*, Bk. III., chap. ii. The King says that those who deny the power of a devil would likewise deny the power of God, if they could for shame; that is to say, those who deny the existence of the worst contradiction to good, must deny the power of the good itself; for such is really his argument. "Since a divel," he says, "is the very contrarie opposite to God, there can be no better way to know God, than by the contrarie, as by the one's power (though a creature) to admire the power of the great Creator, by the falsehood of the one to consider the truth of the other;

being "moved and instigated by the devil"; but nobody but a Methodist doubts nowadays that the real instigators are folly and bad education, or poverty, or disease. The sight of injustice is also a great instigation. Whitefield, in his *Life*, attributes his aberrations from virtue to the devil; who watched for him, he said, and "took his usual advantage";—upon which Bishop Lavington observes, that the man was only excusing himself at the devil's expense, and that Satan had reason to complain, and to look upon himself as an ill-used gentleman. To be serious,—why should we set up an imaginary malignant being to warn our mistakes and our anger with; to learn how to hate and persecute in behalf of the very doctrines that protest against hatred and persecution; and to endanger a confusion in all our notions of justice, benevolence, and common sense? Sterne, in his *Tristram Shandy*, has copied a form of excommunication once in use against thieves and malefactors, and by which their eyes, limbs, and every particle of them, body and soul, were damned for ever and ever in the name of all that was held sacred and good.[1] Dr. Slop was employed to read it

by the injustice of the one to consider the justice of the other; and by the cruelty of one to consider the mercifulness of the other; and so forth in all the rest of the essence of God, and qualities of the Divell."—Ibid., Bk. II, chap. vii. What contempt must Scot have felt for such logic as this! There is one point founded upon it that might have been granted to the king; viz., that by reading his book you may know by contraries what a book ought to be.

[1] A translation is to be found in Scot, who proceeds to make the following remark: "This terrible curse with Bell, Book, and Candle, added thereunto, must need work wonders: howbeit, among thieves it is not much weighed, among wise and true men it is not well liked, to them that are robbed it bringeth small relief: the priest's stomach may well be eased, but the goods stolen will never the sooner be restored. Hereby is bewrayed both the malice and folly of Popish Doctrine, whose uncharitable impiety is so impudently published, and in such order uttered, as every sentence (if opportunity served) might be proved both heretical and diabolical. But I will answer this cruel answer with another cure far more mild and civil, performed by as honest a man as he that made the other, whereof mention was lately made.

"So it was that a certain Sir John, with some of his company, once went abroad a jetting, and in a moonlight evening robbed a miller's weir, and stole all his eels. The poor miller made his moan to Sir John himself, who willed him to be quiet: for he would so curse the thief and all his confederates, with Bell, Book, and Candle, that they should have small joy of their fish. And therefore the next Sunday Sir John got him into the pulpit, with surplice on his back and his stole about his neck, and pronounced these following in the audience of the people:

"All you that stole the miller's Eelès,
Laudate Dominum de Cœlis;
And all they that consented thereto,
Benedicamus Domino.

"Lo (saith he) there is sauce for your eels, my master."

out loud; Uncle Toby whistled Lillibullero all the while in ecstasy of astonishment; observing at one passage, "our armies swore terribly in Flanders, but nothing to this:—for my own part I could not bear to treat and curse my dogs so!" Dr. Slop continues:

"May St. John the Precursor, and St. John the Baptist, and St Peter, and St. Paul, and St. Andrew, and all other Christ's Apostles, curse him. May the holy and worshipful company of martyrs and confessors, who by their holy works are found pleasing to God Almighty, curse him. May the holy choir of the holy virgins damn him. May all the saints who from the beginning of the world and everlasting ages are found to be beloved of God, damn him. May he be damned wherever he be, whether in the house or stables, the garden or the field, or the highway, or in the path, or in the wood, or in the water, or in the church. May he be cursed in living, in dying. May he be cursed in all the faculties of his body. May he be cursed inwardly and outwardly. May he be cursed in the hair of his head. May he be cursed in his brains, and in his vertex. [That is a sad curse, quoth my father.] In his temples and in his forehead,—in his ears, in his eyebrows, in his eyes, in his cheeks, in his jaw-bones, in his nostrils, in his arms, in his hands, in his fingers.

"May be be damned in his mouth, in his breast, in his heart and purtenance! down to the very stomach.

"May he be cursed in all the joints and articulations of his members, from the top of his head to the sole of his foot. May there be no soundness in him.

"May the Son of the living God, with all the glory of His Majesty —[here my Uncle Toby, throwing back his head, gave a monstrous long, loud *whew—w—w*, something betwixt the interjectional whistle of hey-day! and the word itself]—curse him [continued Dr. Slop], and may Heaven, with all the powers which move therein, rise up against him, curse and damn him, unless he repent, and make satisfaction. Amen. So be it,—so be it. Amen."

"I declare," quoth my Uncle Toby, "my heart would not let me curse the devil himself with so much bitterness." "He is the father of curses," replied Dr. Slop. "So am not I," replied my uncle. "But he is cursed, and damned already, to all eternity," replied Dr. Slop.

"I am SORRY FOR IT," quoth my Uncle Toby.

Dr. Slop drew up his mouth, and was just beginning to return my Uncle Toby the compliment of his *whu—w—w*, or interjectional whistle, when the door hastily opening in the next chapter but one —put an end to the affair.—*Tristram Shandy*, Bk. III, chap. xi.

But the affair was not put an end to. It has flourished, and brought forth good fruit. When people were led to consider that Jews had organs and dimensions like themselves, they first began not to loathe them, then they pitied them, and at last they did them justice. A similar process of reflection

took place in behalf of birds and beasts: it was discovered that horses and dogs had limbs to be hurt, as well as ourselves; and it is now doubted by some whether we ought to shut in a cage a winged animal, whose region is the air. (By and by we shall begin to have commiseration for fish, and anglers will cease to think themselves the humanest of men.) At length the devil himself was done justice to; and noble-hearted Burns finally wished him out of his coal-hole. So

> Fare you well, auld Nickie-ben!
> O wad ye tak a thought and men'!
> Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
> Still hae a stake—
> I'm wae to think upo' yon den
> Even for your sake!

A FEW WORDS ON ANGELS

As we have said so much about Devils, we thought we could not complete these supernatural discussions better, nor leave off with a "pleasanter taste in the mouth," than by adding what we know of Angels. We hope it will prove like a dessert after the "hot dishes."

Angel comes from the Greek word Aggelos (pronounced Angelos), and signifies a messenger. Mercury in Hesiod is called the Angel of Jupiter. Any messenger, literally speaking, is an angel. A ticket-porter might write on his card, "Thomas Jones, Angel." A beautiful woman, coming to us with an errand of peace or joy, is literally, as well as metaphorically, an angel. But in modern language (and herein we desire to speak with a seriousness becoming the idea of "the sweet and loving angels," as Luther calls them [1]) the word signifies one of the multitudes of those winged spirits, who, according to the Jews and Christians, enjoy the beatitude of the divine presence, are eternally glorifying it with hymns and harpings, and are occasionally dispatched to us on messages or with aid. Luther is of opinion, that while occupied in heaven, they are, nevertheless, fighting for us on earth; "for," says he, in his homely way, and with that vein of familiarity in his respect, which

[1] *Table-Talk.*

does not diminish the real reverence of enthusiasm, "the angels have long arms." But it has been the general opinion of the churches, that every man has a guardian angel assigned him, who helps him in his ways, encourages his virtues, and supplies proper trouble on occasion to turn him from his vice. This is the Good Dæmon of the Platonists; nor is it possible to make inquiry into the nature of the one spirit without hearing of the other.

Nothing is here meant to be insinuated against the existence of myriads of heavenly creatures. We have the same hope of their existence as we have of thousands of other things, good and lovely, and the same tendency to disbelieve in their useless opponents. But the most orthodox believers may, according to the divines, be too anxious and too peremptory on these points; and therefore we shall not follow them in their flights with St. Dionysius, who pretended to draw up a peerage of the angelic noblesse. We shall not venture to say with the great poet (who, after all, made a bad business of it),—

> Into the heaven of heaven I have presumed
> An earthly guest:

neither shall we discuss with the churchmen whether angels have or have not bodies; whether they are always exercising their understandings; how long it would take them to come down from the eighth heaven, reckoning at the rate of a thousand miles an hour; or how many of them could dance on the point of a needle without jostling. A Jesuit, of the name of La Cerda, informs us that a single angel whirls the heavens, and all the orbs about with it, at the rate of 26,000 German miles an hour.[1] We cannot take his word for it; and, indeed, the greater and more angelical the hopes of mankind become, the less will they take people's words for anything, a dogma by its essence containing the principles of falsehood, which is the reason why so many fine ones come to nothing, and endanger the virtues they pretend to support.[2]

Yet, on reflection, we give a list of the alleged hierarchy of angels, and of some of their names. The poets, having made use of them, have rendered them a warrantable part of fiction; and there is a music in the sound. Milton, in the addresses of

[1] *De Excellentia Spirituum Cœlestium*, chap. ii.

[2] The learned reader need not be informed that the word *angel*, like a great many other words in Scripture, is capable of having other interpretations put upon it than that of a winged messenger from above. See a work entitled the *Oriental Missionary*.

Satan, does not observe the due order of the hierarchy, which stands as follows:

The SERAPHIM	who excel in love.
CHERUBIM	knowledge.
THRONES	superiority to sin, and in influence upon those below them.
DOMINATIONS	freedom of service and the regulation of the divine glory.
VIRTUES	execution of the divine will.
POWERS	subjection of evil spirits.
PRINCIPALITIES	are the chief governors of the divine messengers.
ARCHANGELS	chief messengers.
ANGELS	messengers.

These are the "trinal triplicities" of which Spenser talks; the whole hierarchy consisting of three classes, and every class of three sections. Upon the subject of their employment round the "throne" of the divine being, we would rather not dwell; our respect for the mystery of the Deity being too great, and not choosing to degrade it even to the heights of poetry. We may remark, however, that the placing Seraphim before Cherubim, —or love before knowledge,—can hardly be thought unworthy of anything divine, and is a fine moral. The distinction of offices and faculties in these lists of angels is, it must be confessed, not always very distinct. It is not so in the one before us, and they differ in various authors.[1] Of the names of angels, the following comprise the most received and the most musical. There are four celebrated archangels:

MICHAEL, who is said to preside over the East Wind, and the Nations in that quarter.	
RAPHAEL	the West.
GABRIEL	the North.
URIEL	the South.

[1] See Heywood's *Hierarchie of Angels; A Treatise of Angels*, by John Salkeld, London, 1613; *A Theological Discourse of Angels and their Ministries*, by Benjamin Camfield, etc.; and for matters relative to angels in general, consult also La Cerda, before mentioned, and a work entitled *Rabbinical Literature*, by the Rev. J. P. Stehelin, in 2 vols. 8vo, 1748. La Cerda contains a number of celestial anecdotes; and Mr. Stehelin's work is a curious compilation of things fantastic, but, upon the whole, showing a kindliness of imagination which Christians would hardly expect from Jews, and which they would be more Christian in some points if they would imitate. The Jews, for instance, like our sect of Universalists, believe that the devils themselves may be saved. There is one very grand notion in this book. The Jews believe that there are three voices constantly going through the world, unheard of mortal ears: the *Voice of the globe of the sun*, the *Voice of the Soul departing from the body*, and the *Voice of the murmuring of Rome*. This is the most magnificent idea of the Roman capital ever conceived.

Whether by accident or system, this assignment of quarters is very suitable to the characters given to the respective archangels, Michael being the fierce and more dictatorial virtue, Raphael "the affable archangel," and Uriel the angel of the sun. It has been observed, on a similar ground, that the names of the two princes of painting, Raphael and Michael Angelo (the most visible angels ever possessed by the Romish Church, and very lucky ones for her) were singularly expressive of their different qualities, as well as of the rank they held in their paradise. Corelli's name of Arcangelo was a like felicity; no musician, except Handel, touching forth a more angelical note than he did, with his air-drawn bow. Handel, in addition to this, fairly sets the angels floating, with his wafting symphonies; and, when he concludes, you lose their feet in heaven. Let the reader allow me to mention in this place, as no unsuitable one, the divine air of "Waft her, angels," and the still diviner one, "There were shepherds abiding in the fields," with its Raphaelesque recitative. Nothing can be simpler, more touching, more sincere. You are conscious of the innocent shepherds keeping their flocks in the cool night. Their very looks are painted in the artless notes, and the angels speak to them in a few others, equally simple and beautiful.

Other names of angels:

Hamabiel	Maion	Ophaniel
Ambriel	Malthidiel	Arcan
Zamiel	Jeremiel	Zuriel, and
Varchiel	Ariel	Muriel
Jurabatres		

"El" is a termination, denoting God. Thus, Uriel signifies the Light of God; Raphael, the Medicine of God,—the Celestial Healer. These and other angels were supposed to preside over the zodiac, the planets, the elements, etc., and indeed over everything that could be presided over, down to a weed in the grass. The Rabbis were of opinion that they made themselves bodies to appear in, out of the snow under the Throne of Glory; and that if they were absent from heaven seven days in succession they were unable to return.

It is not our intention to speak of the Fallen Angels or of their "Loves." It is much easier to conceive a loving than a fallen angel; but our present object is to describe the happy winged spirit as he appears to the eye of innocence and imagination. Infants, when they smile without an apparent cause, are supposed to see angels. It is these whose faces we would behold.

Our guesses as to the nature of any being may be unlimited; but we can paint images of him only from what we know, and hence we draw happy spirits in the happiest human shape.

> To whom the angel with a smile that glowed
> Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue.—MILTON.
>
> Her angel face
> As the great eye of heaven shined bright,
> And made a sunshine in the shady place.—SPENSER.
>
> Occhi avea neri, e chioma crespa d'oro,
> Angel parea di quel del sommo coro.—ARIOSTO.[1]

Ariosto's heroine, who is a personification of Beauty, is named Angelica. So we call a beautiful boy a cherub; and though sophisticate ladies may find fault with being called angels, and not think it very sincere, it is still one of the best and most natural appellations which the rapture of love can bestow on beauty and goodness.

Our friend the Jesuit, above quoted, makes mention indeed of old angels. He describes one, who appeared to the mother of St. Eucherius, and told her that she was about to be brought to bed of an archbishop.[2] This venerable anticipation looks as much like an old angel as anything well can; but still we cannot fancy an elderly seraph, or a cherub of two-and-sixty. Jesuits are famous for having odd notions of things divine. They are celebrated in particular for not understanding the exact limits of what may be feigned and what not: and accordingly, in our friend's book we have a story of an angel, who imposed himself upon a farmer for one of his ploughmen, in order that the latter might cultivate his love of the truth at chapel.[3] Yet in the same book we have an account of another pious person, who, being extremely addicted to angels ("*addictissimus angelis*"), would never tell a lie, not even to save his life; that is to say, would not do what the angels would. The best story in La Cerda is one which Massinger made the ground of his Virgin Martyr. An extract or two from the tragedy we keep for the conclusion of this article, as the best part of it, and as boys keep the sunny side of their apple for the last relish. The angel proper, as the heralds would call him, is neither old nor false, but young, beautiful, ingenuous, rosy, bright, with wings, and a white vest. La Cerda gives us to understand

[1] Black eyes he had, and sunny curls of hair;
He seem'd an angel, newly from the air.

[2] La Cerda, chap. xliii.

[3] Ibid, chap. ii.

(and here he is innocent enough) that he is "sometimes clothed in blue, rarely in purple." Some of the poets have made his wings to be put on and off at pleasure, and many have painted them as of gorgeous colour.

> Of silver wings he *took* a shining pair,
> Fringed with gold, unwearied, nimble, swift.
> FAIRFAX'S *Tasso*.

Cowley, in the *Davideis*, is still more particular to this point, but the passage is in his worst style, and therefore must not be quoted. It is doubtful whether the word *wore* in the following passage of Milton does not imply the same thing. Speaking of Raphael, when he came down on his message to Adam, he says:

> Six wings he *wore*, to shade
> His lineaments divine: the pair that clad
> Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
> With regal ornament: the middle pair
> Girt, like a starry zone, his waist; and round,
> Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold,
> And colours dipt in heaven: the third his feet
> Shadowed from either heel with feather'd mail,
> Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
> And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance filled
> The circuit wide.—*Paradise Lost*, Book V.

Which last image is taken from a beautiful couplet of Fairfax, never to be too often repeated:

> On Lebanon at first his foot he set,
> And shook his wings with rosy may-dews wet.

Again, in the passage where Milton describes Satan in the likeness of a cherub:

> And now a stripling cherub he appears,
> Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
> Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
> Suitable grace diffused, so well he feigned.
> Under a coronet, his flowing hair
> In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he *wore*
> Of many a coloured plume, sprinkled with gold;
> His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
> Before his decent steps a silver wand.

This description has been much admired; and indeed Milton cannot dilate into any description in which something admirable is not to be found. In gorgeousness of colour his angels are not to be surpassed; yet we cannot help thinking that there is something too princely, and conscious, and full-dressed: not native enough to the sweetness and simplicity of heaven. They do not announce themselves so much by the delightfulness of their presence as the dazzling of it, which is surely the inferior

thing. It is doubtful whether Raphael has not too much *bird-coating*; and there is something in the "silver wand" which the youthful Cherub bears before him, which, to our minds, is positively poor and in the way. Milton seems to have had a regard for a stick. He has given one to Satan to support his uneasy steps over the burning soil of hell; and here he gives him another in heaven to look becoming with. Princes in those times walked with a stick—perhaps the poet himself did; and he has, unquestionably shown more regard for the kingly character in heaven than he did on earth. His angelic notions are full of "regal ornament," of "coronets," and kingly state.

> He, *kingly*, from his state
> Inclined not . . .

says he, speaking of Michael. But they have worse moral failures than these. To say nothing of the contradictions into which his story compelled him; and to sum up in one specimen all the faults to which polemics had rendered his divinity liable, what are we to think of his making his angels guilty of positive, gratuitous malignity? Satan, travelling towards earth, comes to a sea of jasper, on which is a staircase which descended from heaven.

> The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
> The fiend by easy accent, or *aggravate*
> *His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss.*—Book III, l. 553.

This is a piece of malignity more worthy of hell than heaven; if, indeed, hell could be imagined capable of at once being in a state of bliss and desirous of giving sorrow. In fact, this is the most infernal passage in *Paradise Lost*. Luckily, it is mere talking: no being could be guilty of a mockery so inhuman; for there is, in reality, no such thing as malignity for its own sake. The most wilful inflicters of suffering are themselves in a state of suffering, which they think to alleviate by thrusting a part of it on others; and angels, having no suffering at all, would be the only true devils, if they would act as the poet's slip of the pen has here made them.

There is a pretty passage of an angel in Spenser; and there the heavenly creature is at his proper work: he is doing good. The poet has given him pied wings like a jay, which is perhaps not so well. They would better have suited a Cupid. But the picture is in his happiest manner. It is attended with those circumstances of verisimilitude which make the most supernatural things appear natural. On turning to the passage, I find that Spenser has compared his angel to Cupid, and this too

in a stanza which is the more displaced by reason of the very perfection of its paganism. It is as if Poussin had lumped together a Scripture piece and a Bacchanal. A pilgrim finds Guyon sleeping in "a shady delve," and somebody sitting by him.

> Beside his head there satt a faire young man,
> Of wondrous beauty and of freshest yeares,
> Whose tender bud to blossome new began,
> And flourish faire, above his equall peares;
> His snowy front, curled with golden heares,
> Like Phœbus' face adorned with sunny rayes,
> Divinely shone; and two sharpe winged sheares,
> Decked with divers plumes like painted jayes,
> Were fixed at his back, to cut his ayery wayes.
>
> *Faërie Queene*, Book II, canto 8.

There are the wings of Titian's Cupid, in the picture where his mother is blinding him. Perhaps it was a consciousness to that effect which led the poet into his comparison. We omit the latter as unsuitable; but we must not omit what follows. The stranger delivers up his charge to the pilgrim; and then, says the poet,—

> Eftsoones he gan display
> His painted nimble wings, and vanisht quite away.
> The palmer seeing his left empty space,
> And his slow eies beguiled of their sight,
> Waxe sore affraid, and standing still a space,
> Gaz'd after him, as fowle escapt by flight.

Where the "blessed bird" (as Dante calls him) goes to, we do not presume to say; nor what he does when he has ended his journey.

> What know we of the blest above
> But they that sing, and that they love?

says Waller. To say we know it, is to say a little too much; but to imagine it is reasonable enough, considering that singing and loving (provided they be genuine of their sort) are two of the highest pleasures on earth, and may be fancied to touch upon heaven. Milton has said some fine things about the loves of angels, to which we content ourselves with referring the reader. Taken out of their context, and of that "celestial colloquy sublime," we might do them an injustice. The angel, in this article of ours, may be said to become our property, as soon as we can descry him with earthly eyes, and no sooner; or we may fancy we hear before we see him.

> And now 'tis like all instruments,
> Now like a lonely flute;
> And now it is an angel's song,
> That bids the heavens be mute.
>
> COLERIDGE'S *Ancient Mariner*.

We must humanise everything before we can love it. To fancy an angel rising in the east like a star, is making him too potent and gigantic. He must come near to us, and in our own shape; must be guarding innocence or consoling adversity, or suggesting wisdom and sweeter thoughts to those who fancy themselves wicked, or conversing with the glad eyes and inarticulate raptures of infancy; for infants, when smiling and babbling to themselves, are supposed to be talking with angels. Even those beautiful gorgeous wings, in which he is invested by the poets, hardly seem to be an apparel in which he is to *stay* with us. They are for a sudden vision, a *stoop* out of the lustre of heaven. It is remarkable that the painters have never given coloured wings to their angels. The temptation would seem to be great,—the palette looks like a wing ready made,—and yet they have not given way to it. No: *the* angel is the angel of one's infancy, the blooming white-vested boy with the spotless wings; and thus is he painted by the Guidos and Correggios.

We think we see him now, looking out of one of their divine pictures, young, blooming, innocent, natural as unconscious perfection, beautiful as truth. He is a boy on a noble scale, but still human; and his large curls are tawny with the noons of Paradise.

An angel is the chorister of heaven, the page of martyrdom, the messenger from the home of mothers. He comes to the tears of the patient, and is in the blush of a noble anger. He kisses the hand that gives an alms. He talks to parents of their departed children, and smooths the pillow of sickness, and supports the cheek of the prisoner against the wall, and is the knowledge and comfort which a heart has of itself when nobody else knows it, and is the playfellow of hope, and the lark of aspiration, and the lily in the dusk of adversity. All this we believe him, even should we hold his appearance to be a fable, and though we deny the letter of a thousand things out of which we would extricate the spirit; for wherever there is goodness and imagination, there of necessity are thoughts angelical, winged indestructible hopes. The driest line of the geometer, if he knew all, were a wand of as much wonder as Prospero's; or if it were not so, Prospero's itself were none, and our most exalted aspirations would still be as warrantable as the earth we touch. If anything unwise could be pardonable, the only fault not to be forgiven were dogmatism; and yet where could an angelical thought exist, and forgiveness not be discovered?

We conclude with the lovely scene out of Massinger. Drayton

gives us to understand that angels converse in poetry. We know not how that may be; but if ever a blooming, angelical boy was visible in a book, and talked on paper, it is here.

Angelo, an Angel, attends Dorothea as a Page. Angelo, Dorothea. The time midnight.

Dor. My book and taper.
Ang. Here, most holy mistress.
Dor. Thy voice sends forth such music, that I never
Was ravish'd with a more celestial sound.
Were every servant in the world like thee,
So full of goodness, angels would come down
To dwell with us: thy name is *Angelo*,
And like that name thou art. Get thee to rest;
Thy youth with too much watching is opprest.
Ang. No, my dear lady. I could weary stars,
And force the wakeful moon to loose her eyes,
By my late watching but to wait on you.
When at your pray'rs you kneel before the altar,
Methinks I'm singing with some quire in heaven,
So blest I hold me in your company.
Therefore, my most loved mistress, do not bid
Your boy, so serviceable, to get hence;
For then you break his heart.
Dor. Be nigh me still, then.
In golden letters down I'll set that day,
Which gave thee to me. Little did I hope
To meet such worlds of comfort in thyself,
This little, pretty body, when I, coming
Forth of the Temple, heard my beggar-boy,
My sweet-fac'd godly beggar-boy, crave an alms,
Which with glad hand I gave, with lucky hand;
And when I took thee home, my most chaste bosom
Methought was filled with no hot wanton fire,
But with a holy flame, mounting since higher,
On wings of cherubims, than it did before.
Ang. Proud am I that my lady's modest eye
So likes so poor a servant.
Dor. I have offer'd
Handfuls of gold but to behold thy parents.
I would leave kingdoms, were I queen of some,
To dwell with thy good father; for the son
Bewitching me so deeply with his presence,
He that begot him must do't ten times more.
I pray thee, my sweet boy, show me thy parents;
Be not ashamed.
Ang. I am not: I did never
Know who my mother was; but by yon palace,
Filled with bright heav'nly courtiers, I dare assure you,
And pawn these eyes upon it, and this hand,
My father is in heav'n; and, pretty mistress,
If your illustrious hour-glass spend his sand
No worse than yet it doth, upon my life,
You and I both shall meet my father there,
And he shall bid you welcome.
Dor. A bless'd day![1]

[1] "This scene," says an excellent critic, "has beauties of so high an order, that with all my respect for Massinger, I did not think he had

We had a great mind to conclude with this scene, but there is another in the same play which presents us with so beautiful a picture of the angel,—somewhat between the gorgeousness of the poets in general and the simplicity of the painters,—that we cannot resist copying it. Theophilus, the persecutor, who has been the cause of the martyrdom of Dorothea, and who is converted and becomes a martyr himself, is soliloquising upon the torture he will wreak upon those who differ with him, when Angelo comes in with a basket of fruit and flowers. The Roman does not see him at first, and so continues talking.

Theoph. This Christian slut was well,
A pretty one; but let such horror follow
The next I feed with torments, that when Rome
Shall hear it, her foundation at the sound
May feel an earthquake. How now! [*Music.*
Ang. Are you amazed, sir?
So great a Roman spirit, and doth it tremble?
Theoph. How cam'st thou in? To whom
Thy business?
Ang. To you:
I had a mistress, late sent hence by you
Upon a bloody errand; you entreated,
That when she came in to that blessed garden
Whither she knew she went, and where now happy,
She feeds upon all joy, she would send to you
Some of that garden fruit, and flowers; which here,
To have her promise saved, are brought by me.
Theoph. Cannot I see this garden?
Ang. Yes, if the master
Will give you entrance. [*He vanisheth.*
Theoph. 'Tis a tempting fruit—
And the most bright-cheeked child I ever viewed,—
Sweet smelling, goodly fruit. What flowers are these?
In Dioclesian's gardens the most beauteous,
Compared with these, are weeds: is it not February,
The second day she died? frost, ice, and snow,
Hang on the beard of winter, where's the sun
That gilds the summer? Pretty, sweet boy, say,
In what country shall a man find this garden?
My delicate boy,—gone! vanished! Within there,
Julianus! Geta!

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poetical enthusiasm capable of furnishing them. His associate, Dekker, who wrote *Old Fortunatus*, had poetry enough for anything. The very impurities which obtrude themselves among the sweet pieties of this play (like Satan among the sons of heaven), and which the brief scope of my plan fortunately enables me to leave out, have a strength of contrast, a raciness and a glow in them, which are above Massinger. They set off the religion of the rest, somehow, as Caliban serves to show Miranda."—*Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*, by Charles Lamb.

Thus it is that fine natures know how to turn fugitive or imaginary evil to account, instead of thinking themselves called upon to show that they cannot think too much evil about it; as some critics have done, whom it were a poor thing to name in so sweet a place.

Enter Julianus and Geta.

Both. My lord.
Theoph. Are my gates shut?
Geta. And guarded.
Theoph. Saw you not a boy?
Jul. Where?
Theoph. Here he entered; a young lad;
A thousand blessings danced upon his eyes,
A smooth-faced, glorious thing, that brought this basket.
Geta. No, sir.
Theoph. Away—but be in reach, if my voice calls you.

[*Exeunt.*

We need not point out to our readers the "bright-cheeked child," the "smooth-faced glorious thing," that brings a basket, —a thousand blessings dancing upon his eyes;—but we notice the words that we may enjoy them in their company.—And so with this perfect taste of the angel and his Eden fruit, we conclude.

SPRING

Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah, fields, beloved in vain!—GRAY.

HAIL, beautiful season! hail, return of the green leaves! hail, violets, daisies and buttercups! hail, blue sky; and ye, white silver clouds, "gay creatures of the elements," the posterity of your turbid sires of winter time!

Hail, moreover, ye evidences of spring, even in cities! Hail, green in the windows, and on the ladies' caps! Hail, coats instead of great-coats! Hail, beaux and other butterflies! Hail, the leaving off of fires; provided, dear fires, among my countrymen, ye are left off! Great encroachers upon summer-time are ye; mighty disputers of the sunshine with May and June!

There is a tendency all over the temperate part of Europe to anticipate the beauties of spring,—to fancy the season more forward than it is, or to complain that it is otherwise. I find this in Italy as well as in England. Horace Walpole said that it was the fashion to say there was no winter in Italy. There is certainly a winter sharp enough to startle foreigners; and the spring in Tuscany is far from premature. I have not found the weather in either season different from what Horace says of the snows in winter, and Virgil of the stormy showers in spring.

The *Primavera*, or spring of the Italian poets, disappoints expectation as much as the Aprils and Mays described by our own. *Primavera* comes in March, and is properly the first part of the vernal season, the *ver primum* of the Latins. The blossom issues forth on the trees, the cranes are seen travelling in the sky, the hedges are lively with violets and periwinkles; but it is not a season warranting what the poets say of it, and warming the blood. Cold winds prevail, as with us; the snows, lingering on the mountains, embitter them, and the rains are violent. April commences the true poetical spring, and May is spring confirmed, the real season of the "*novelli amori*," the May of the British poets. Whether the seasons alter from time to time in different parts of the world is a point contested. Most likely they do. But, for a long time past, the May of our poets is rather June, and very often the middle and end of June rather than the beginning. For many years it has been common to have fires as late as the old King's birthday, the 4th of June. What we call spring is indeed *spring*, literally speaking; and a very beautiful idea the word gives us. The *ver* of the ancients appear to have meant the rising of the sap. Our Saxon term is more lively and visible. It is not merely the life, but the leaping of the season; the gladness of its pulse. And yet the vivacity belongs rather to nature than to us. We have not got rid enough of our colds and clothings.

If the season is very fine indeed, the true time of enjoyment in England is the one that Thomson has selected for his *Bower of Indolence*,—

> A season atween June and May,
> Half prankt with spring, with summer half embrown'd.

When the spring came this year in Tuscany, it was a great pleasure to me to see the corn, vine and oil, all preparing to flourish together,—for the fields are nothing else. What are meadows and cornfields in England, are orchards full of olives and vines in Tuscany, with the corn growing betwixt them. The green corn running in close strips among the olive trees, and the preparations for the budding of the vines,—it being the custom here to make trellises of reed-work, really elegant in many parts of the hedges,—furnish a lively spectacle. But spring, as well as winter, made me think of home. I put on my cap and pitched myself in those delicious fields, all over daisies and buttercups, which go sloping from Hampstead to West End and Kilburn,—fields, the representatives of thousands

of others all over England, and in which I would rather take a walk "atween June and May" than in the divinest spot recorded by the divinest of southern poets. It is common with persons in love to fancy that everybody must be happy who lives in the society of the object of their attachment. In the same manner, when I am compelled to forgo the privileges of my Cap, and confine myself to wishing without enjoying (which is sometimes the case), I cannot help envying the reader for his power to go into the places I write of. I say to myself, "Now somebody will take it into his head to go and look at those fields, or he will go and look at those he is more acquainted with; or he will, or he *can*, go into some English field or other rich with grass and powdered with flowers. He will see the hedges; he will see the elms and oaks (there are no elms and oaks here). He will, or he may and can, or might, could, would, should walk in a wood full of them. Furthermore, he will meet with some old friends."

Reader, if there is any man who has offended you, and whom you find it hard to forgive, forgive him, I entreat you; for I forgive you, and you are the most provoking person I have known a long time. I could knock the paper out of your hand. Don't you sit giggling there, you other reader, C.L., A., B., or C., or whatever title please thy godfather's ear. Conscious of your power to take a long walk through the sun and dust, you take advantage of my weakness to triumph over me. But, lo! my Wishing-Cap is on me in all its glory. The very mention of your name makes me present. I am with you; walk with you, talk with you. It was I who sighed just now while you were reading. Reader, we are reconciled and together.

Fortunately I am not of a temper to make the worst of any situation I happen to be cast in. And I look upon it as a reward for my love of Nature that I have never been in a situation in which I had not some glimpse of her to console me. Even in prison I had a little garden to myself, and raised my own heartsease. It may not be the most grateful thing in the world to think of a jail while strolling about the most classical ground in Tuscany. I confess I think of it very often. But Nature will excuse me, because my dejection is owing to my love. If I had not loved her so much at home, I should not miss, as I do, the old homestead. I do what I can. I think of Petrarch and Boccaccio, of Milton and Galileo, and Fiesole, which I see from my window, and which is a common boundary to my walks. I endeavour to keep the vines and the olive trees

new to me. Besides Virgil and the Italy of books, I make the olives remind me of Athens, of Plato, and Homer, and Sophocles, and Socrates, and a still more reverend Name in another country, who went up into the Mount of Olives to pray. A Dominican convent is a little in my way, with its inscription in honour of the fiery saint, "the destroyer of heretics"; but the friars no longer inhabit it, and I endeavour to consider even the Inquisition as a violent note struck in the ears of mankind to make them attend to the doctrine it contradicted. Philosophy has separated the doctrine from its abuse, and the Inquisition is no more. I think of the gayer sort of abuses, the red side of their cheek, the jollity of a refectory. Pope's picture is before me, of

> Happy convents, buried deep in vines,
> Where slumber abbots purple as their wines.

(A couplet as plump and painted as the subject.) The transition to Horace and Anacreon is a pleasing necessity. I am in the very thick of the vines of Redi, the author of the *Bacchus in Tuscany*. His Bacchus is as flourishing a god as ever, and sworn by as devoutly, though the saints have displaced his image. Florence, at a little distance, meets the turn of my eye at every opening of the trees. In short, I am in a world of poetry and romance, of vines and olives, and myrtles (which grow wild), of blue mountains and never-ending orchards, with a beautiful city in the middle of it. What signifies? I think of an English field in a sylvan country, a cottage and oaks in the corner, a path and a stile, and a turf full of daisies; and a child's book with a picture in it becomes more precious to me than all the landscapes of Claude.

I intended to sprinkle this article with some flowers out of the Italian poets; but positively I will not do it. They are not good. They are not true. The grapes are sour. Commend me to the cockney satisfactions of Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton, who talk of "merry London," of lying whole hours looking at the daisies, and of walking out on Sunday mornings to enjoy the daisies and green fields. There are no daisies here that I can see, except those belonging to the Grand Duke. What is a daisy belonging to a duke? Nature is not to be put upon a gentleman's establishment. The other fine houses do not impose upon me. They want comfort and fire-places, and instead of parks, and other natural pieces of ground about them, have vines and olives, vines and olives without end.

The peasants are all vine-dressers and olive-squeezers. You meet a piece of a cow occasionally on your table; but a good, handsome, live animal, with a low, I have not encountered for many months. You must go to Lombardy for a pasture. There are goats, very large and bucolic; but goats in England are poor and small, which is the proper goat, and renders a kid pathetic. The only one I have a respect for is the companion of our voyage, given us by a friend, and preserved through various vicissitudes for her sake. A dog belonging to an acquaintance of ours inhospitably bit her ear off, and the storms at sea frightened away her milk. But she now reposes for life, like a matron, enjoying herself among scenes more native to her palate than England itself.

If the sky in England would only mitigate a little of its clouds and fogs in favour of one of its countrywomen, and of a modest demi-exotic, who loves a green field better than all the sugar-canes of his ancestors. . . . But what signifies talking? Suffice it, that an Englishman in Italy, who loves Italian poetry, and is obliged to be grateful to Italian skies, assures his beloved countrymen (who are not always sensible of the good things they have about them) that there is nothing upon earth so fine as a good, rich English meadow in summer time. That English Frenchman, La Fontaine, is of the same opinion; for when he speaks with rapture of a bit of turf, and says there is nothing to equal it, it must be recollected that such turf is more native to England than to France; and so he would have told us had he come over to England, as he ought to have done, and taken a stroll in our fields with his friend, St. Evremond. Even a Tuscan's idea of a garden is not complete without a piece of turf, though the *podere*, or farm, encroaches everywhere, and pounds and shillings must be planted in the shape of olive trees. A garden in the English taste is a "miracolo" and a "paradiso"; their poetry rises within them at the sight of it, but they think this is only for princes and grand dukes. Yet Horace could not dispense with his grass and his oak-trees; and the valley which I look upon from my window sparkles in the *Decameron* with a perpetual green. Nature inspires great authors, and they repay her by rescuing her very self from oblivion, and keeping her transitory pictures fresh in our hearts. *They*, thank God, as well as the fields, *are* Nature; and so is every great and kindly aspiration we possess.

TWELFTH NIGHT

A STREET PORTRAIT—SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY—RECOLLECTIONS OF A TWELFTH NIGHT

CHRISTMAS goes out in fine style,—with Twelfth Night. It is a finish worthy of the time. Christmas Day was the morning of the season; New Year's Day the middle of it, or noon; Twelfth Night is the night, brilliant with innumerable planets of Twelfth-cakes. The whole island keeps court; nay, all Christendom. All the world are kings and queens. Everybody is somebody else; and learns at once to laugh at, and to tolerate, characters different from his own, by enacting them. Cakes, characters, forfeits, lights, theatres, merry rooms, little holiday faces, and, last not least, the painted sugar on the cakes, so bad to eat but so fine to look at, useful because it is perfectly useless except for a sight and a moral,—all conspire to throw a giddy splendour over the last night of the season, and to send it to bed in pomp and colours, like a prince.

And not the least good thing in Twelfth Night is, that we see it coming for days beforehand, in the cakes that garnish the shops. We are among those who do not "like a surprise," except in dramas (and not too much of it even there, nor unprepared with expectation). We like to know of the good things intended for us. It adds the pleasure of hope to that of possession. Thus we eat our Twelfth-cake many times in imagination before it comes. Every pastrycook's shop we pass, flashes it upon us.

Coming *Twelfth-cakes* cast their shadows before;

if shadows they can be called, which shade have none; so full of colour are they, as if Titian had invented them. Even the little ragged boys who stand at those shops by the hour, admiring the heaven within, and are destined to have none of it, get, perhaps, from imagination alone, a stronger taste of the beatitude than many a richly-fed palate, which is at the mercy of some particular missing relish,—some touch of spice or citron, or a "leetle more" egg.

We believe we have told a story of one of those urchins before, but it will bear repetition, especially as a strong relish of it has come upon us, and we are tempted to relate it at greater length. There is nothing very wonderful or epigrammatic in it, but it

has to do with the beatific visions of the pastry-shops. Our hero was one of those equivocal animal-spirits of the streets, who come whistling along, you know not whether thief or errand-boy, sometimes with bundle and sometimes not, in corduroys, a jacket, and a cap or bit of hat, with hair sticking through a hole in it. His vivacity gets him into scrapes in the street, and he is not ultra-studious of civility in his answers. If the man he runs against is not very big, he gives him abuse for abuse at once; if otherwise, he gets at a convenient distance, and then halloos out, "Eh, stupid!" or "Can't you see before you?" or "Go, and get your face washed." This last is a favourite saying of his, out of an instinct referable to his own visage. He sings "Hokee-pokee" and "A Shiny Night," varied occasionally with an uproarious "Rise, Gentle Moon," or "Coming Through the Rye." On winter evenings, you may hear him indulging himself, as he goes along, in a singular undulation of howl;—a sort of gargle,—as if a wolf were practising the rudiments of a shake. This he delights to do more particularly in a crowded thoroughfare, as though determined that his noise should triumph over every other, and show how jolly he is, and how independent of the ties to good behaviour. If the street is a quiet one, and he has a stick in his hand (perhaps a hoop-stick), he accompanies the howl with a run upon the gamut of the iron rails. He is the nightingale of mud and cold. If he gets on in life, he will be a pot-boy. At present as we said before, we hardly know what he is; but his mother thinks herself lucky if he is not transported.

Well; one of these elves of the *pavé*—perplexers of Lord Mayors, and irritators of the police—was standing one evening before a pastry-cook's shop-window, flattening his nose against the glass, and watching the movements of a school-boy who was in the happy agony of selecting the best bun. He had stood there ten minutes before the boy came in, and had made himself acquainted with all the eatables lying before him, and wondered at the slowness, and apparent indifference, of jaws masticating tarts. His interest, great before, is now intense. He follows the newcomer's eye and hand, hither and thither. His own arm feels like the other's arm. He shifts the expression of his mouth and the shrug of his body, at every perilous approximation which the chooser makes to a second-rate bun. He is like a bowler following the nice inflections of the bias; for he wishes him nothing but success; the occasion is too great for envy; he feels all the generous sympathy of a knight of old, when

he saw another within an ace of winning some glorious prize, and his arm doubtful of the blow.

At length the awful decision is made, and the bun laid hands on. "*Yah!* you fool," exclaims the watcher, bursting with all the despair and indignation of knowing boyhood, "you have *left the biggest*!"

Twelfth-cake and its king and queen are in honour of the crowned heads who are said to have brought presents to Jesus in his cradle—a piece of royal service not necessary to be believed in by good Christians, though very proper to be maintained among the gratuitous decorations with which good and poetical hearts willingly garnish their faith. "The Magi, or Wise Men, are vulgarly called (says a note in Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, quarto edition by Ellis, p. 19) the three kings of Collen (Cologne). The first, named Melchior, an aged man with a long beard, offered gold; the second, Jasper, a beardless youth, offered frankincense; the third, Balthasar, a black or Moor, with a large spreading beard, offered myrrh." This picture is full of colour, and has often been painted. The word Epiphany (ἐπιφάνεια, *superapparitio*, an appearance from above), alludes to the star which is described in the Bible as guiding the Wise Men. In Italy, the word has been corrupted into Beffania, or Beffana (as in England it used to be called, Piffany); and Beffana, in some parts of that country, has come to mean an old fairy, or Mother Bunch, whose figure is carried about the streets, and who rewards or punishes children at night by putting sweetmeats, or stones and dirt, into a stocking hung up for the purpose near the bed's head. The word *Beffa*, taken from this, familiarly means a trick or mockery put upon any one:—to such base uses may come the most splendid terms! Twelfth Day, like the other old festivals of the church of old, has had a link or connection found for it with Pagan customs, and has been traced to the Saturnalia of the ancients, when people drew lots for imaginary kingdoms. Its observation is still kept up, with more or less ceremony, all over Christendom. In Paris, they enjoy it with their usual vivacity. The king there is chosen, not by drawing a paper as with us, but by the lot of a bean which falls to him, and which is put into the cake; and great ceremony is observed when the king or the queen "drink"; which once gave rise to a jest, that occasioned the damnation of a play of Voltaire's. The play was performed at this season, and a queen in it having to die by poison, a wag exclaimed with Twelfth Night solemnity, when her Majesty

was about to take it, "The Queen drinks." The joke was infectious; and the play died, as well as the poor queen.

Many a pleasant Twelfth Night have we passed in our time; and such future Twelfth Nights as may remain to us shall be pleasant, God and good will permitting: for even if care should be round about them, we have no notion of missing these mountain-tops of rest and brightness, on which people may refresh themselves during the stormiest parts of life's voyage. Most assuredly will we look forward to them, and stop there when we arrive, as though we had not to begin buffeting again the next day. No joy or consolation that heaven or earth affords us will we ungratefully pass by; but prove, by our acceptance and relish of it, that it is what it is said to be, and that we deserve to have it. "The child is father to the man"; and a very foolish-grown boy he is, and unworthy of his sire, if he is not man enough to know to be like him. What! shall he go and sulk in a corner because life is not just what he would have it? Or shall he discover that his dignity will not bear the shaking of holiday merriment, being too fragile and likely to tumble to pieces? Or lastly, shall he take himself for too good and perfect a person to come within the chance of contamination from a little ultra life and Wassail-bowl, and render it necessary to have the famous question thrown at his stately and stupid head:

> Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?

This passage is in *Twelfth Night*, the last play (be it never forgotten) [1] which Shakespeare is understood to have written, and which shows how in his beautiful and universal mind the belief in love, friendship and joy, and all good things, survived his knowledge of all evil,—affording us an everlasting argument against the conclusions of minor men of the world, and enabling the meanest of us to dare to avow the same faith.

Here is another lecture to false and unseasonable notions of gravity, in the same play,—

> I protest [quoth the affected steward Malvolio] I take these wise men that crow so at these set kind of fools, to be no better than the fools' zanies.
>
> Oh [says the Lady Olivia], you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite. To be generous, guiltless, and

[1] This opinion of Malone's has been ably set aside by Mr. Knight. The spirit of the Shakespearian wisdom still however remains.

of free disposition, is to take those things for bird-bolts, that you deem cannon-bullets.

This is the play in which are those beautiful passages about music, love, friendship, etc., which have as much of the morning of life in them as any that the great poet ever wrote, and are painted with as rosy and wet a pencil:

> If music be the food of love, etc.
>
> Away before me to sweet beds of flowers;
> *Love-thoughts lie rich* when canopied with bowers.
>
> She never told her love,
> But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
> Feed on her damask cheek, etc.
>
> I hate ingratitude more in a man,

says the refined and exquisite Viola,

> Than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness,
> Or any taint of vice, whose strong corruption
> Inhabits our frail blood.

And again,

> In nature there's no blemish, but the mind

[that is to say, the faults of the mind;]

> *None can be call'd deform'd but the unkind.*

The play of *Twelfth Night,* with proper good taste, is generally performed, at the theatres, *on* Twelfth Night. There is little or nothing belonging to the occasion in it, except a set of merry-makers who carouse all night, and sing songs enough to "draw three souls out of one weaver." It is evident that Shakespeare was at a loss for a title to his play, for he has called it *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*; but the nocturnal revels reminded him of the anniversary which, being the player and humorist that he was, and accustomed, doubtless, to many a good sitting-up, appears to have stood forth prominently among his recollections of the year. So that it is probable he kept up his Twelfth Night to the last:—assuredly he kept up his merry and romantic characters, his Sir Tobies and his Violas. And, keeping up his stage faith *so well,* he must needs have kept up his home faith. He could not have done it otherwise. He would invite his Stratford friends to "king and queen," and, however he might have looked in face, would still have felt young in heart towards the budding daughters of his visitors, the possible Violas perhaps of some love-story of their own, and not more innocent in "the last recesses of the mind" than himself.

We spent a Twelfth Night once, which, by common consent of the parties concerned, was afterwards known by the name of *the* Twelfth Night. It was doubted among us, not merely whether ourselves, but whether anybody else, ever *had* such a Twelfth Night:

> For never since created *cake*,
> Met such untiring force, as named with these
> Could merit more than that small infantry,
> Which *goes to bed betimes*.

The evening began with such tea as is worth mention, for we never knew anybody make it like the maker. Dr. Johnson would have given it his placidest growl of approbation. Then, with pianoforte, violin, and violoncello, came Handel, Corelli, and Mozart. Then followed the drawing for king and queen, in order that the "small infantry" might have their due share of the night, without sitting up *too* too-late (for a reasonable "too-late" is to be allowed once and away). Then games, of all the received kinds, forgetting no branch of Christmas customs. And very good extempore blank verse was spoken by some of the court (for our characters imitated a court), not unworthy of the wit and dignity of Tom Thumb. Then came supper, and all characters were soon forgotten but the feasters' own; good and lively souls, and festive all, both male and female,—with a constellation of the brightest eyes that we had ever seen met together. This fact was so striking, that a burst of delighted assent broke forth, when Moore's charming verses were struck up:

> To ladies' eyes a round, boys,
> We can't refuse, we can't refuse;
> For bright eyes so abound, boys,
> 'Tis hard to choose, 'tis hard to choose.

The bright eyes, the beauty, the good humour, the wine, the wit, the poetry (for we had celebrated wits and poets among us, as well as charming women), fused all hearts together in one unceasing round of fancy and laughter, till *breakfast*,—to which we adjourned in a room full of books, the authors of which might almost have been waked up and embodied, to come among us. Here, with the bright eyes literally as bright as ever at six o'clock in the morning (we all remarked it), we merged one glorious day into another, as a good omen (for it was also fine weather, though in January); and as luck and our good faith would have it, the door was no sooner opened to let forth the ever-joyous visitors, than the trumpets of a regiment quartered in the neighbourhood struck up into the morning air,

seeming to blow forth triumphant approbation, and as if they sounded purely to do us honour, and to say, "You are as early and untired as we."

We do not recommend such nights to be "resolved on," much less to be made a system of regular occurrence. They should flow out of the impulse, as this did; for there was no intention of sitting up so late. But so genuine was that night, and so true a recollection of pleasure did it leave upon the minds of all who shared it, that it has helped to stamp a seal of selectness upon the house in which it was passed, and which, for the encouragement of good-fellowship and of humble aspirations towards *tree-planting*, we are here incited to point out; for by the same token the writer of these papers planted some plane-trees within the rails by the garden-gate (selecting the plane in honour of the Genius of Domesticity, to which it was sacred among the Greeks); and anybody who does not disdain to look at a modest tenement for the sake of the happy hours that have been spent in it, may know it by those trees, as he passes along the row of houses called York Buildings, in the New Road, Marylebone. A man may pique himself without vanity upon having planted a tree; and, humble as our performance has been that way, we confess we are glad of it, and have often looked at the result with pleasure. The reader would smile, perhaps sigh (but a pleasure would or should be at the bottom of his sigh), if he knew what consolation we had experienced in some very trying seasons, merely from seeing those trees growing up, and affording shade and shelter to passengers, as well as a bit of leafiness to the possessor of the house. *Every-one should plant a tree who can.*[1] It is one of the cheapest, as well as easiest, of all tasks; and if a man cannot reckon upon enjoying the shade much himself (which is the reason why trees are not planted everywhere), it is surely worth while to bequeath so pleasant and useful a memorial of himself to others. They are green footsteps of our existence, which show that we have not lived in vain.

"Dig a well, plant a tree, write a book, and go to heaven," says the Arabian proverb. We cannot exactly dig a well. The parish authorities would not employ us. Besides, wells are not so much wanted in England as in Arabia, nor books either; otherwise we should be two-thirds on our road to heaven already. But trees are wanted, and ought to be wished for,

[1] Young trees from nursery-grounds are very cheap, and cost less than flowers.

almost everywhere; especially amidst the hard brick and mortar of towns; so that we may claim at least one-third of the way, having planted more than one tree in our time; and if our books cannot wing our flight much higher (for they never pretended to be anything greater than birds singing among the trees), we have other merits, thank Heaven, than our own to go upon; and shall endeavour to piece out our frail and most imperfect ladder with all the good things we can love and admire in God's creation.

DREAMS ON THE BORDERS OF THE LAND OF POETRY

I. THE DEMANDS OF POETRY

I HAVE not been in the habit of making memorandums for my verses. Such verse as I could write I have written at once. But the older I grow, the more reverent notions I entertain of poetry; and as I cannot aspire to put anything into verse, and pretend to call it poetry, without shaping it in the best manner of which I am capable (for poetry, without the fit sculpture of verse, is no more to be called poetry, than beauty conceived is beauty accomplished), so I have neither leisure to pay it the requisite attention, nor can I afford the spirit and emotion necessary for this task above all others. The greatest of all poets (who, according to Plato, is God) uttered the planets in his energy, and they went singing around him, perfect. Milton (not to speak it with profaneness, after that unreachable instance) could pour forth his magnificent verses, mighty and full of music, like a procession towards a temple of glory. We conceive of Shakespeare, that he had a still easier might, and that the noblest verses to him were no greater difficulty than talking. He dispenses them as Nature does the summer showers and the thunder. Alas! to us petty men, who are not sure that we have even the right of being

> Proud to be less, but of that godlike race,

to us and our inferior natures there are sometimes toils in life less voluntary and more exhausting than poetry, in reposing from which it is not always possible for us to labour even with the minor energies necessary to throw out the forms within our capacity. We cannot wrestle to fit purpose even with that

pettier god within us. We cannot condense those lighter vapours of inspiration into their most vigorous and graceful shape, and feel aright to say to the world, "Behold!"

A poet's hand should be like the energy within the oak, to make strong; and like the wind that bends its foliage, to make various. Without concentration, and without variety, there is neither strength of imagination, nor beauty of verse. Alas! I could no more look to making verses with an ambition of this sort, wearied as I am at present, than I could think of looking through burning-glasses for eyes, or hewing the solid rock into a dance of the Graces.

But I have the wish to be a poet, and thoughts will arise within me as painful not to express as a lover's. I therefore write memorandums for verse;—thoughts that might perhaps be worthy of putting into that shape, if they could be properly developed;—hints and shadows of something poetical, that have the same relationship to actual poetry as the little unborn spirits that perish by the waters of Lethe have to the souls that visit us, and become immortal.

II. MY BOWER

I seek not for grand emotions when I muse. My life has had enough of them. I seek for enjoyment and repose; and, thanks to the invincible youthfulness of my heart, I find them with as much ease in my green world as giant sorrows have found me in the world of strife.

Woods and meadows are to me an enchanted ground, of which a knight-errantry of a new sort has put me in possession.

In the indulgence of these effusions I lay my head as on the pillow before I sleep, as on the grass in summer, as on the lap that soothes us. O lovers of books and of nature, lovers of one another, lovers of love, rest with me under my bowers; and the shadows of pleasant thoughts shall play upon your eyelids.

III. ON A BUST OF BACCHUS

Gigantic, earnest, luxuriant, his head a very bower of hair and ivy; his look a mixture of threat, and reassurance, and the giving of pleasure; the roughness of wine is in his eyes, and the sweetness of it on his lips. Annibal Caracci would have painted such a face, and grown jealous when his mistress looked at it.

To those shoulders belong the hands that lifted the satyr by the nape of the neck, and played with the lion's mouth as with a dog's.

Cannot you see the glow in the face, even though sculptured? a noontide of the south in its strength? with dark wells in the eyes, under shining locks and sunny leaves? The geniality of his father Jove is in it, with the impetuosity of wine: but it is the lord, not the servant, of wine; the urger of the bowl among the divinities, when the pulses of heaven are in a movement with song and dance, and goddess by the side of god looks downward.

Such did he appear when Ariadne turned pale with loving him; and he said, with divine insolence in his eyes, "Am I not then better than a mortal?"

IV. THE GAINS OF A LOVE UNVULGAR

No:—admire beauty as I may, I cannot love it unless it be lovely; unless it be kind and sincere, and have a soul in it befitting the body. Some, in thinking of a face, are content with a sprightly substance: the true woman is lost upon them: animated waxwork would do as well. Of such are those who flatter themselves, that they know most of the sex, and who speak of it with an air of stupid cunning. These men are incapable even of the voluptuousness they affect. Not knowing the soul of beauty, they do not properly know even the body of it.

Others include a sense of grace; others the mind, the wit, the affections, all that makes the human being a charmer, and puts twenty souls instead of one into the wish to thank and to delight her. When lovers of the vulgar sort receive a kiss from the lips of such a woman (unworthy they to receive it! and mistaken she to believe them better!) they are sensible but of one kind of beauty; they kiss the lip and the substance only. The others, when they receive it—grace, beauty, intelligence, the affections, the rosy colour, the good-heartedness, and the truth, yes, all these are to be found in the lip, and they kiss them all.

V. SPRING AND SUMMER

The golden line is drawn between winter and summer. Behind, all is bleakness, and darkness, and dissolution. Before, is hope, and soft airs, and the flowers, and the sweet season of

hay; and people will cross the fields, reading, or walking with one another (lovers); and instead of the rain that soaks death into the heart of green things, will be the rain which they drink with delight; and there will be sleep on the grass at midday, and early rising in the morning, and long moonlight evenings with quiet walks; and we shall sit with our window open, and hear the rooks.

Already the rains are well-tempered. We care not for the chillness, for it is vernal, the cold of a young hand instead of an old one: and at noon, when the sun slips from out a blue interval of sky, we feel him warm on our backs.

Passing the top of the green lane, a gush of song bursts out upon us from the ivy-bush that clothes the sides of the old house.

See!—birds come by fives and tens in the meadows, agile, unseen before, springing away with a song. And the tops of the horse-chestnut boughs look as if they glowed into the air with life.

VI. RAIN AND SUNSHINE IN MAY

Can anything, out of the pale of the affections, be more lovely than the meadows between the rains of May, when the sun smites them on the sudden like a painter, and they laugh up at him, as if he had lighted a loving cheek!

And did I say they were out of the pale of the affections? See how my language contradicts me: for all lovely things hang together; neither can a true note of pleasure be touched, but all the chords of humanity respond to it.

I speak of a season when the returning threats of cold, and the resisting warmth of summer-time, make robust mirth in the air; when the winds imitate on a sudden the vehemence of winter; and silver-white clouds are abrupt in their coming down; and shadows in the grass chase one another, panting, over the fields, like a pursuit of spirits. With undulating necks they pant forward, like hounds or the leopard.

See! the cloud is after the light, gliding over the country like the shadow of a god.

And now the meadows are lit up here and there with sunshine, as if the soul of Titian were standing in Heaven and playing his fancies upon them. Green are the trees in shadow; but the trees in the sun, how twenty-fold green they are—rich and variegated with gold. Ovid's parrot inhabits such foliage in the Birds' Elysium.

VII. AN EVENING LANDSCAPE

Did anybody ever think of painting a picture in writing? I mean literally so, marking the localities as in a map.

The other evening I sat in a landscape that would have enchanted Cuyp.

Scene—a broken heath, with hills in the distance. The immediate picture stood thus, the top and the bottom of it being nearly on a level in the perspective:

Trees in a sunset, at no great distance from the foreground.

A group of cattle under them, party-coloured,

principally red, standing on a small landing place;

the Sun coming upon them through the trees.

A rising ground with trees. Broken ground. A rising ground with trees.

Another landing place, nearly on a level

with the cows, the spectator sitting and looking at them.

The Sun came warm and serious on the glowing red of the cattle, as if recognising their evening hues; and everything appeared full of that quiet spirit of consciousness, with which Nature seems rewarded at the close of its day labours.

VIII. A SIGHT OF THE GODS

I sat upon a green platform under pines, my legs resting over the edge upon a natural step; and a valley lay before me, in a heath, oval, perfect, with hills in the distance. And I said, "By the love I bear you, visions of beauty, come before me, and play me magnificent shows!"

And they came.

And I saw gods and white goddesses, of mighty stature but lovely; for coarseness was not discernible in their features, but all beauty. And they floated in and about, as my thought summoned them, reclining on the air in the easiness of their will.

And there was Apollo, and he slew the Python in a twilight;

and Aurora and the morn broke, all gold and roses; and the Graces and the whole place became white with lilies; and there was Paris giving the apple; and the Muses; and Hercules and Alceste; and Pan, Pomona, Hylas, and Zephyr and Flora, and the Hesperides. Zephyr took Flora into the air with a net, as the Italian poet sings; and the twins of Leda passed, with their dancing lights; and Hercules led along Alceste, who in the faintness of her death had been as mighty as he.

Sometimes music poured in, as from a hundred fountains; and sometimes a goddess called. Not a leaf then stirred; but the silence trembled. I heard Venus speak; which was as if there should never be sorrow more.

IX. BEAUTY NOT EXAGGERATED BY IMAGINATION

They say that I speak too highly of what I admire; and that half the beauties which I discern in any object I put there myself. Believe them not. Nature has been before us. We only read what she has written. If others cannot read as much, is that the fault of the book? No: it is their own.

Look at one of the simplest and the most beautiful objects in the world, a cheek; and tell us, how came it? What a thought was the cheek itself, when Nature created it! And do you suppose that a vulgar eye estimates it enough? Put the question to those who can do something like it themselves; to Raphaël, or to the poets.

As the poet's thought is worth what it produces, so the cheek of the beauty is worth what it can suggest.

POCKET-BOOKS AND KEEPSAKES

If publications of this nature proceed as they have begun, we shall soon arrive at the millennium of souvenirs. Instead of engravings, we shall have paintings by the first masters; our paper must be vellum; our bindings in opal and amethyst; and nobody must read us except in a room full of luxury, or a bower of roses. As to the proprietor of the work, he will not condescend to be wholesale. He will take up the trade of Keepsakes exclusively; and Pitt diamonds are not to be sold by the lump. The purchaser will bring a casket for his duodecimo, and deposit a gem.

The reader knows that splendid passage in Marlowe, where the rich Jew of Malta, standing amongst his treasures, and scorning his more vulgar gains, riots in contemplation of the mighty concentrated wealth of his rubies and emeralds. The lines tell, one by one, as if they were diamonds themselves. The fellow cuts them, as out of a quarry, with a pleasure amounting to the austere; and, with the same easy sternness and severity of gusto, piles them monotonously before us, insolently magnificent. He should have been a proprietor of pocket-books.

> As for those Samnites, and the men of Uzz,
> That bought my Spanish oils and wines of Greece,
> Here have I pursed their paltry silverlings.
> Fie! what a trouble 'tis to count this trash!
> Give me the merchants of the Indian mines
> That trade in metal of the purest gold;
> The wealthy Moor, that in the eastern rocks
> Without control can pick his riches up,
> And in his house keep pearls like pebble stones;
> Receive them free, and sell them by the weight;
> Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,
> Jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds,
> Beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds,
> And seld-seen costly stones of so great price,
> As one of them, indifferently rated,
> And of a caract of this quality,
> May serve, in peril of calamity,
> To ransom great kings from captivity.
> This is the ware wherein consists my wealth
> And thus, methinks, should men of judgment frame
> Their means of traffic from the vulgar trade,
> And as their wealth increaseth, so enclose
> Infinite riches in a little room.
> But now how stands the wind?
> Into what corner peers my halcyons' bill?
> Ha! to the east? yes: see, how stand the vanes?
> East and by south: why then I hope my ships
> I sent for Egypt, and the bordering isles,
> Are gotten up by Nilus' winding banks:
> Mine argosies from Alexandria,
> Loaden with spice and silks, now under sail,
> Are smoothly gliding down by Candy shore
> To Malta through our Mediterranean sea.

'Sdeath, sir; nothing but a Pocket-book could have brought him to this pass. Just so will the proprietor of *The Perfection*, or *The Ne Plus Ultra*, or *The Rapture*, or *The Too Much* (or whatever else our future publications may be called), stand among his shelves of souvenirs, and talk of his former trade and of his present.

> As for those Baldwins, and the men of Long,
> That bought my Walter Scotts and cookery books,
> Here have I pursed their paltry sovereigns.
> Fie, what a trouble 'tis to count such books!

Give me the dealers in the souvenirs,
That trade in volumes worth their weight in gold,
Myself their chief, that with my princely funds
Without control can buy good authors up;
And in my house heap books like jewelry;
Printed with ink with wine in it, and bound
By fellows, as at operas, in kid gloves;
Books bound in opal, sapphire, amethyst,
With topaz tooling, Eden green morocco,
That once was slippers to an emperor;
And full of articles of so great price,
As one of them, indifferently written,
And not ascribed unto a man of quality,
Might serve, in peril of a writ of Middlesex,
To ransom great bards from captivity.
This is the sort of publishing for me:
And thus, methinks, should noble booksellers
Discrepate matters from the vulgar trade.
And as their wealth increaseth, so enclose
Infinite profit in a little book.
But now how stands the ledger?
Into what pockets peer my Christmas bills?
Ha! to the duke's! and see—how stands the clock?
Three, and half-past: why then I hope my men
I sent to Grosvenor Place and Hyde Park Corner
Are gotten up by Mr. Bootle's house;
My gatherers-in from th' east and Albany,
Serious with drafts immense, now under button,
Are smoothly gliding down by Saville Row,
To Bond Street, through our Hanoverian ways.

We are much tempted to go on with these beatific visions of bookselling, and bring all the luxuries in Spenser and Ben Jonson to bear upon them; but we should fill our pages with quotations. Besides, we should be the death of some worthy Bibliomaniacs who, in addition to their love of old books, are polygamous in their reading, and judiciously fond of the new. There is Mr. Utterson, whom his friend, the Rev. Thomas Frognall Dibdin, describes as "looking with unceasing delight" at the "beauteous and instructive tomes" upon his shelves;—we should fix him in that posture for ever; and as to the Rev. Thomas himself, who cannot bear, as it is, a common sumptuous publication, "tickled up with the enticing tooling of Charles Lewis," he would fairly be lost and swallowed up in the splendours we should set before him. Frognall, already saltatory, would leap out of his vellum.

The history of Pocket-books and their forerunners, Almanacs, Calendars, Ephemerides, etc., is ancient beyond all precedent: even the Welshman's genealogy, the middle of which contained the creation of the world, is nothing to it. See Milton's Latin poem, *De Ideâ Platonicâ*. The Hydraulic calendars of the Egyptians are things of yesterday; the wooden ones of our

Saxon ancestors were *to-morrow* compared with it. We shall therefore decline tracing it from all Eternity (who, according to Milton, was the first person that kept a pocket-book), and content ourselves with observing that the pocket-book, in the ordinary sense of the word, is the same thing as the table-book or tablets of old, with an almanack attached to it. Tablets (*tavolette*) came to us, like almost everything else, from Italy; and are still to be purchased, made of the same materials as of old—slate, ivory, etc. There is mention of a table-book so late as the time of Walsh, who has written some agreeable verses on one; and of Swift, whose ridicule of the bad spelling in *A Lady's Ivory Table-book* hastened, no doubt, the reformation that has long taken place in that matter; a fault, by the way, for which, as in other cases, his own sex was responsible, and not theirs: not to mention that lords as well as ladies could be very heterographical in those days. Swift, indeed, admits the incorrectness of "beau-spelling"; but Pope himself sometimes spelt as badly as his mother.

It was about that time that books of paper were found to be more convenient to the pocket than tablets, and then the word was changed from Table to Pocket-book. For a long period they partook of the usual unwieldiness of a first invention. A pocket-book of the time of our grandmothers no more resembles a pocket-book now, at least not the ones in vogue, than a watch of Charles's time, with a leathern case and cat-gut machinery, and as big round as a turnip, resembles the bijoux that are hung at the end of necklaces. But then our grandmothers had pockets! And pockets of what size! Too grateful are we for the apples and home-made cakes which they used to draw out of them, to speak of them with irreverence. At present, a grandmother must call at the pastry-cooks' as she comes along; and reticules hold little, and bundles are not the thing. The muff does something indeed for us, but that is only in winter; and what is a muff to those glorious old dimity paniers, which would have held a feast! We say "us," because we make a point of partaking on these occasions; and though we have no grandmother, we have long had a grandmother-in-law, and law makes no difference in apples. Apples-in-law are very good things. But everything was on a large, warm, household scale in those days. We remember a series of pocket-books in a great drawer, that, in addition to their natural size, seemed all to have grown corpulent in consequence of being fed with receipts, and copies of verses, and cuttings out of newspapers.

The hook of the clasp had got from eyelet to eyelet, till it could unbuckle no further. These books, in the printed part, contained acrostics and rebuses, household recipes for various purposes, and a list of public events. There was love, politics, and eating. It is a pity the readers could not grow as corpulent as their pocket-books, with as little harm. The cosy memorials we speak of lay in a drawer full of crumbs of lavender, like so many abbots in clover.

Pocket-books, nowadays, are all for compression and minuteness. They endeavour to contain the greatest quantity of matter in the smallest compass; to which end the little nonpareil types now in use are of great service. We were acquainted once with a painstaking lover of his ease, who would not undergo any trouble whatever which he could avoid by a shrewd exercise of a greater. He would lay stratagems not to put coals on the fire; and by a series of politic manœuvres contrive to avoid snuffing a candle. This person, when shown a copy of the Literary Pocket-book, which happened to be larger than the usual ones, looked melancholy, and asked how he was to carry it about with him. At the same time he drew his own from his pocket: when it was allowed, that a gentleman who could carry nothing bigger than that showed his good sense in refusing to bring on himself such a load of responsibility; and we all respected him accordingly. A person may now have the old Pocket-book, the old Almanac, and the old Tablets (in the shape of leaves of vellum) all confined in a Lilliputian book no thicker than a penny's worth of gingerbread. The diffusion of literature has carried off the verses and stories from pocket-books of this description, now called Souvenirs, Atlases, and Pocket Remembrancers; and as the smallness of the type enables them to afford a great addition of letterpress, there have come up, by degrees, all those lovely lists of lords and commons, and household officers, and battle array of Army and Navy, which form the sole literature of many an aspiring youth in employment, and many a lieutenant's sister on a rainy Sunday. Here people read the names of dukes and marquises till they fancy coronets on their own heads: there the cabinet ministers and lord-gold-sticks make a noble clatter, the yeoman of the mouth gaping mystery at the conclusion; and there one sees one's cousin Tom mentioned, and knows in what delicious year one's uncle was promoted to a lieutenant-colonelcy. Afterwards come the bankers, with each his pleasing address; and lastly, the hackney-coach fares, so very useful, that everybody resolves

to lug them out and convict the coachman on the spot: which he never does, because he knows it will be to no purpose.

The pocket-books that now contain any literature are "got up," as the phrase is, in the most unambitious style. The rivalry of the day will probably mend them. Commonplaces of a certain description will always be saleable, because they flatter the self-love of a great number of readers, who are pleased to find their notions re-echoed, and who think they could write pretty nearly as well. But emulation compels change of some sort. There is room for plenty of novelty in every species of pocket-book. Even lists might be increased to great advantage, and turned in a new manner. In some things, it must be owned, it would be difficult to improve. Those little delicate engravings of landscapes and country seats, at the heads of the pages in the Regent's Pocket-book, were, in particular, a happy thought. The graces of vignettes, however, are endless. Mr. Stothard could turn any pocket-book into a nest of Cupids. Every subject might have its allegory, and every allegory be crammed full of beauties. Flowers, outlines, portraits, antiques, miniature copies of Claude and Poussin, such as have been lately poured forth at Paris—all these, and fifty other things, might be put in greater requisition, and turned to account for all parties.

We are now come, however, to a new and more splendid species of pocket-book, in which a great deal of this is done. There are pocket-books in a new but very proper sense—namely, books for the pocket, without implying that they are to be written in. We speak, in the first place, of those little editions of popular works which appear in the glass-case of the booksellers' shops every Christmas, and with their varied and glittering bindings tempt the beholders to make presents. Among these are works now exploded in the circles of literature, such as the *Tasso* and *Ariosto* of Hoole, Glover's *Leonidas*, etc.; but almost any books are better than none. A taste for the very commonest verses, like that for the commonest tunes on a hand-organ, is an addition to the humanities, and serves to keep the best things alive. Other publications of this kind are of the highest order, such as Pope and Milton; and there are many of the intermediate class very good and fitting. A spirited bookseller, however, might make a new and profitable addition to the stock. The bindings are seldom very costly, but they are more so than ordinary, sufficient to render the present graceful; and they are generally in good taste. On opening the book we meet, as in a door-way, the elegant ideal

beauties of Mr. Westall, or the interesting women of the junior Corbould; and if we start sometimes to find them in company with Hervey's *Meditations*, or the *Night-Thoughts* of Dr. Young, we agree, upon reflection, that nothing can be more natural. Hervey looks as if he presented us with a piece of involuntary candour; and the doctor's nocturnal cogitations are considerably improved. Women are very clerical. Hervey may be band; but woman is gown.

It struck somebody who was acquainted with the literary annuals of Germany, and who reflected upon this winter flower-bed of the booksellers—these pocket-books, souvenirs and, Christmas presents, all in the lump—that he would combine the spirit of all of them, as far as labour, season, and sizability went; and omitting the barren or blank part, and being entirely original, produce such a pocket-book as had not been yet seen. The magician in Boccaccio could not have done better. Hence arose the Forget-me-not, the Literary Souvenirs, the Amulets, and the Keepsakes, which combine the original contribution of the German annual with the splendid binding of the Christmas English present. Far are those for whom this article is written from undervaluing the works of their predecessors, or the contest with their rivals. It is a contest of sunbeams which shall produce the finest gems; *whose* tree, or *whose* parterre, shall burst out into a flush of more splendid blossoms.

Non nostrum inter vos tantas componere lites. For our part we enjoy them all. We confess we are anxious in behalf of one in particular; and do hope, that as every single copy of all the others may be the best and *uniquest* that ever was seen, so every one of ours may be *uniquessement*, so that Messrs. Payne and Foss may not know what to think, and Mr. Thomas Frognall Dibdin may be obliged to be held down, lest he should do himself a *bliss-chief*: mischief it could not be from so ecstatic a cause. We fear he would attempt to devour the book.

To confess a weakness, we must own to a greater sympathy with the outsides of books than our mention of this gentleman might imply. Respecting the insides we sometimes venture to differ with him. We cannot go so far as to be transported with anything that he thinks festive in old monkery, or spotless in modern prudery, the immaculate and very profitable Shakespeares not excepted. We cannot consent to doubt with Thomas respecting the merits of Sir Richard Steele, or to admit his comparative nothingness with regard to Addison; albeit we allow that the latter, besides a very great man, was a sort

of born clergyman, and a member of the privy council. We are not in the habit, with Frognall, of leaping up to kiss and embrace every "enticing" edition in vellum, and every "sweetly-toned, mellow-toned, yellow morocco binding," calling them "precious," "comforting," "bright," "beauteous," "bewitching," "large and lovely," and "irresistible"; epithets of which we allow the full force in their proper places. But we must say, that in common with Mr. Dibdin, we *have* a penchant for good and suitable, and even rich and splendid bindings; and would fain have the scorching sun strike upon a whole room full of them, with all the colours of a flower-garden or a cathedral window. We confess our hearts misgave us when we quoted the passage about Mr. Utterson, for we are very much of his opinion, and can gaze with delight at a splendid set of shelves. Buonaparte, they say, had a room in which he used to recline on a sofa, and gaze on a window painted with the escutcheons of his vassal monarchs. We could lie in the same manner and gaze on things much better worth looking at—the souls of great men attired in gorgeous dresses. We would have our library as splendid as the casement in the *Eve of St. Agnes*. Our Milton should be as "richly dight" as anything "storied" on glass, with organ-pipes clustered on the back. We would have our Chaucer (not an old but an ever young and morning poet) "painted with delight," like his own daisied meadows. Spenser should be in a very Bower of Bliss; and as to our *Arabian Nights*, we would have them, if we could, bound and lettered by genii, and dazzling with all the wealth of "Ormus and of Ind." They should cast a light upon the carpet.

The genius of binding, we trust, will put forth all its powers on thousands of Keepsakes.

> Sudate, fuochi, a preparar metalli.
>
> Return, Charles Lewis; the feign'd voice is past,
> That smok'd thy tools. Return, ye new Du Sueils,
> And call the dyers, and bid them hither cast
> Their skins, and colours of a thousand hues.
> Bring hither all your quaint enamelling men.

Let us behold once again whate'er is seen

> On fable or romance of Grollier's hand,
> Begirt with Elzevirs and Attic Nights;
> And all who now, book-bit or infidel,
> Tool it in calf-skin, or in skin of russ,
> In vellum, or morocco, or what's-his-name,
> Or what the smugglers brought from Gallic shore,
> When Beaumarchais with all his presses fell
> By fond establishment.

As we had nothing to do with the christening, we may be allowed to express our approbation of the word Keepsake. It is a good English word; cordial, unpremeditated, concise; extremely to the purpose; and, though plain, implies a value. It also sets us reflecting on keepsakes in general, and on the givers of them; and these are pleasant thoughts. We have the pleasure of writing our words, this moment, *with* a keepsake, *on* a keepsake, and of dipping our pen *into* a keepsake. On one side of us are two others, filled with leaves and flowers; and on three sides, books multifarious, comprising many more. Thus we are a gifted writer in one sense, if in no other, and we are very proud of it; because the givers were such as had a right to give, and the receipts were for respect and affection's sake only.

A present, it is said, should be rare, new, and suitable; neither so priceless as to be worth nothing in itself, nor yet so costly as to bring an obligation on the receiver. We know of no such cautious niceties between friends. The giver, indeed, must have the right to bestow; but let this be the case, and a straw from such a hand shall be worth a sceptre from another. A keepsake, in particular, as it implies something very intimate and cordial, is above these ceremonious niceties. We may see what people think of the real value of keepsakes, by the humble ones which they do not hesitate to bestow in wills.

Petrarch, it is true, when he bequeathed a winter garment to his friend Boccaccio to study in, apologised for "leaving so poor a memorial to so great a man"; but this was only to show his sense of the other's merits: he knew that the very grace of the apology supplied all the riches it lamented the want of, and that Boccaccio, when he sat enveloped in his warm gown, would feel "wrapped up in his friend," as Montaigne said of his father. Something that has been about a friend's person completes the value of a keepsake. Thus people bequeath their very hearts to friends, or even to places they have been attached to; and this is what gives to a lock of hair a value above all other keepsakes: it is a part of the individual's self. Franklin made no apology when he left Washington his "fine crab-tree walking-stick, with a gold head curiously wrought in the form of the cap of liberty."

A book may be thought not so good a keepsake as some others, because it is not so durable. In the present instance it may be also objected, that this sort of pocket-book has grown too large for the pocket; and that it cannot be so conveniently

taken about with us as it might be. But a book will last us one's life if we choose; and as to carrying it always with us, we do not always have any friend at one's side. Those who love a book, and especially the giver of it, will not be deterred by a size like that of the present one from taking it into fields and gardens; and in the house the size gives it an advantage over miniature publications, having more to show for itself, and to be adorned with; not to mention that we can make presents of it to our grandmothers, without insulting their venerable eyesight.

But what renders a book more valuable as a keepsake than almost any other is, that, like a friend, it can talk with and entertain us. And here we have one thing to recommend, which to all those who prize the spirit of books and of regard above the letter, can give to a favourite volume a charm inexpressible. It is this: that where such an affectionate liberty can be taken either in right of playing the teacher, or because the giver of the book is sure of a sympathy in point of taste with the person receiving it, the said giver should mark his or her favourite passages throughout (as delicately as need be), and so present, as it were, the author's and the giver's minds at once. We had once the pleasure of seeing a great poet occupied, for this very purpose, in reading the *Faërie Queene*, and marking every verse that pleased him.

For our parts, if friends and lovers chose to set their invention to work, and try how far they could make a literary keepsake the representative of all other keepsakes, we are of opinion that they would realise much more than they are aware of, and find it an agreeable pastime instead of a difficulty. It would be very costly, it is true; and in most cases there is as much good taste in avoiding excessive costliness, as there is in giving princely way to it in others. One precious name, or little inscription at the beginning of the volume, where the hand that wrote it is known to be generous in its wishes, if not in its means, is worth all the binding in St. James's. But if our invention were taxed in the style of the Jew of Malta, and we had his rubies and diamonds to pay the cost with, we would pamper one of these keepsakes into such a book, that the beholder of it on a friend's table should not know whether it were the book itself, or the casket that contained it. First we would have a copy printed on vellum: the cover should be thick with emerald and crystal: keepsakes of all kinds should glitter without and within; hearts in ruby, and fervid letters in opal

there should be illuminations, and miniatures, and crowds of sculpture and arabesque in the smallest compass: a border of the exquisitest flowers on ivory should run round it; and, the easiest thing of all, there should be a crystal with a key to it in the midst, that when the heart was full, the locks of hair might be kissed.

How fortunate for empty hands, that one blessing upon the head can beat all these riches! and yet to imagine it is in some measure to give. The finest new year's present, that we ever read of, was given by Davenant to the lady of his friend and patron, Endymion Porter. See the style in which he makes it, and which Marlowe himself would have exulted to witness:

TO THE LADY OLIVIA PORTER

A PRESENT UPON A NEW YEAR'S DAY

Goe! hunt the whiter ermine! and present
His wealthy skin, as the daye's tribute sent
To my Endymion's love; though she be far
More gently smooth, more soft than ermines are!
Goe! climbe that rock! and when thou there hast found
A star, contracted in a diamond,
Give it Endymion's love; whose glorious eyes
Darken the starry jewels of the skies!
Goe! dive into the southern sea! and when
Thou 'ast found (to trouble the nice sight of men)
A swelling pearle, and such whose single worth
Boasts all the wonders which the seas bring forth,
Give it Endymion's love! whose every teare
Would more enrich the skilfull jeweller.
How I command! how slowly they obey!
The churlish Tartar will not hunt to-day;
Nor will that lazy, sallow Indian strive
To climbe the rock; nor that dull Negro dive.
Thus poets, like to kings, by trust deceived,
Give oftener, what is heard of, than received.

After all, it is easy to combine with a literary keepsake the most precious of all the keepsakes—hair. A braid of it may be used instead of ribbon to mark the page with, and attached to the book in the usual way of a register. And so, with this return home from our altitudes, we conclude.

WALKS HOME BY NIGHT

WATCHMEN

THE readers of these our lucubrations need not be informed that we keep no carriage. The consequence is, that being visitors of the theatre, and having some inconsiderate friends who grow pleasanter and pleasanter till one in the morning, we are great walkers home by night; and this has made us great acquaintances of watchmen, moonlight, *mud*-light, and other accompaniments of that interesting hour. Luckily we are fond of a walk by night. It does not always do us good; but that is not the fault of the hour, but our own, who ought to be stouter; and therefore we extract what good we can out of our necessity, with becoming temper. It is a remarkable thing in Nature, and one of the good-naturedest things we know of her, that the mere fact of looking about us, and being conscious of what is going on, is its own reward, if we do but notice it in good-humour. Nature is a great painter (and art and society are among her works), to whose minutest touches the mere fact of becoming alive is to enrich the stock of our enjoyments.

We confess there are points liable to cavil in a walk home by night in February. Old umbrellas have their weak sides; and the quantity of mud and rain may surmount the picturesque. Mistaking a soft piece of mud for hard, and so filling your shoe with it, especially at setting out, must be acknowledged to be "aggravating." But then you ought to have boots. There are sights, indeed, in the streets of London, which can be rendered pleasant by no philosophy; things too grave to be talked about in our present paper; but we must premise, that our walk leads us out of town, and through streets and suburbs of by no means the worst description. Even there we may be grieved if we will. The farther the walk into the country, the more tiresome we may choose to find it; and when we take it purely to oblige others, we must allow, as in the case of a friend of ours, that generosity itself on two sick legs may find limits to the notion of virtue being its own reward, and reasonably "curse those comfortable people" who, by the lights in their windows, are getting into their warm beds, and saying to one another, "Bad thing to be out of doors to-night."

Supposing, then, that we are in a reasonable state of health and comfort in other respects, we say that a walk home at night

has its merits, if you choose to meet with them. The worst part of it is the setting out; the closing of the door upon the kind faces that part with you. But their words and looks, on the other hand, may set you well off. We have known a word last us all the way home, and a look make a dream of it. To a lover, for instance, no walk can be bad. He sees but one face in the rain and darkness; the same that he saw by the light in the warm room. This ever accompanies him, looking in his eyes; and if the most pitiable and spoilt face in the world should come between them, startling him with the saddest mockery of love, he would treat it kindly for her sake. But this is a begging of the question. A lover does not walk. He is sensible neither to the pleasures nor pains of walking. He treads on air; and in the thick of all that seems inclement has an avenue of light and velvet spread for him, like a sovereign prince.

To resume, then, like men of this world. The advantage of a late hour is, that everything is silent and the people fast in their beds. This gives the whole world a tranquil appearance. Inanimate objects are no calmer than passions and cares now seem to be, all laid asleep. The human being is motionless as the house or the tree; sorrow is suspended; and you endeavour to think that love only is awake. Let not readers of true delicacy be alarmed, for we mean to touch profanely upon nothing that ought to be sacred; and as we are for thinking the best on these occasions, it is of the best love we think; love of no heartless order, and such only as ought to be awake with the stars.

As to cares and curtain-lectures, and such-like abuses of the tranquillity of night, we call to mind, for their sakes, all the sayings of the poets and others about "balmy sleep," and the soothing of hurt minds, and the weariness of sorrow, which drops into forgetfulness. The great majority are certainly "fast as a church" by the time we speak of; and for the rest, we are among the workers who have been sleepless for their advantage; so we take out our licence to forget them for the time being. The only thing that shall remind us of them is the red lamp, shining afar over the apothecary's door; which, while it does so, reminds us also that there is help for them to be had. I see him now, the pale blinker suppressing the conscious injustice of his anger at being roused by the apprentice, and fumbling himself out of the house, in hoarseness and great-coat, resolved to make the sweetness of the Christmas bill indemnify him for the bitterness of the moment.

But we shall be getting too much into the interior of the houses. By this time the hackney-coaches have all left the stands—a good symptom of their having got their day's money. Crickets are heard, here and there, amidst the embers of some kitchen. A dog follows us. Will nothing make him "go along"? We dodge him in vain; we run; we stand and "hish!" at him, accompanying the prohibition with dehortatory gestures, and an imaginary picking up of a stone. We turn again, and there he is vexing our skirts. He even forces us into an angry doubt whether he will not starve, if we do not let him go home with us. Now if we could but lame him without being cruel; or if we were only an overseer, or a beadle, or a dealer in dog-skin; or a political economist, to think dogs unnecessary. Oh! come, he has turned a corner, he has gone; we think we see him trotting off at a distance, thin and muddy, and our heart misgives us. But it was not our fault; we were not "hishing" at the time. His departure was lucky, for he had got our enjoyments into a dilemma; our "article" would not have known what to do with him. These are the perplexities to which you sympathisers are liable. We resume our way, independent and alone; for we have no companion this time, except our never-to-be-forgotten and ethereal companion, the reader. A real arm within another's puts us out of the pale of walking that is to be made good. It is good already. A fellow-pedestrian is company—is the party you have left; you talk and laugh, and there is no longer anything to be contended with. But alone, and in bad weather, and with a long way to go, here is something for the temper and spirits to grapple with and turn to account; and accordingly we are booted and buttoned up, an umbrella over our heads, the rain pelting upon it, and the lamp-light shining in the gutters; "mud-shine," as an artist of our acquaintance used to call it, with a gusto of reprobation. Now, walk cannot well be worse; and yet it shall be nothing if you meet it heartily. There is a pleasure in overcoming obstacles; mere action is something; imagination is more; and the spinning of the blood, and vivacity of the mental endeavour, act well upon one another, and gradually put you in a state of robust consciousness and triumph. Every time you set down your leg you have a respect for it. The umbrella is held in the hand like a roaring trophy.

We are now reaching the country: the fog and rain are over; and we meet our old friends the watchmen, staid, heavy, indifferent, more coat than man, pondering, yet not pondering,

old but not reverend, immensely useless. No; useless they are not; for the inmates of the houses think them otherwise, and in that imagination they do good. We do not pity the watchmen as we used. Old age often cares little for regular sleep. They could not be sleeping perhaps if they were in their beds; and certainly they would not be earning. What sleep they get is perhaps sweeter in the watch-box,—a forbidden sweet; and they have a sense of importance, and a claim on the persons indoors, which, together with the amplitude of their coating, and the possession of the box itself, make them feel themselves, not without reason, to be "somebody." They are peculiar and official. Tomkins is a cobbler as well as they; but then he is no watchman. He cannot speak to "things of night"; nor bid "any man stand in the king's name." He does not get fees and gratitude from the old, the infirm, and the drunken; nor "let gentlemen go"; nor is he "a parishman." The churchwardens don't speak to him. If he put himself ever so much in the way of "the great plumber," he would not say, "How do you find yourself, Tomkins?"—"An ancient and quiet watchman." Such he was in the time of Shakespeare, and such he is now. Ancient, because he cannot help it; and quiet, because he will not help it, if possible; his object being to procure quiet on all sides, his own included. For this reason he does not make too much noise in crying the hour, nor is offensively particular in his articulation. No man shall sleep the worse for him, out of a horrid sense of the word "three." The sound shall be three, four, or one, as suits their mutual convenience.

Yet characters are to be found even among watchmen. They are not all mere coat, and lump, and indifference. By the way, what do they think of in general? How do they vary the monotony of their ruminations from one to two, and from two to three, and so on? Are they comparing themselves with the unofficial cobbler; thinking of what they shall have for dinner to-morrow; or what they were about six years ago; or that their lot is the hardest in the world, as insipid old people are apt to think, for the pleasure of grumbling; or that it has some advantages nevertheless, besides fees; and that if they are not in bed, their wife is?

Of characters, or rather varieties among watchmen, we remember several. One was a Dandy Watchman, who used to ply at the top of Oxford Street, next the park. We called him the dandy, on account of his utterance. He had a mincing

way with it, pronouncing the *a* in the word "past" as it is in *hat*, making a little preparatory hem before he spoke, and then bringing out his "past ten" in a style of genteel indifference; as if, upon the whole, he was of that opinion.

Another was the Metallic Watchman, who paced the same street towards Hanover Square, and had a clang in his voice like a trumpet. He was a voice and nothing else; but any difference is something in a watchman.

A third, who cried the hour in Bedford Square, was remarkable in his calling for being abrupt and loud. There was a fashion among his tribe just come up at that time, of omitting the words "past" and "o'clock," and crying only the number of the hour. I know not whether a recollection I have of his performance one night is entire matter of fact, or whether any subsequent fancies of what might have taken place are mixed up with it; but my impression is, that as I was turning the corner into the square with a friend, and was in the midst of a discussion in which numbers were concerned, we were suddenly startled, as if in solution of it, by a brief and tremendous outcry of— ONE. This paragraph ought to have been at the bottom of the page, and the word printed abruptly round the corner.

A fourth watchman was a very singular phenomenon, a *Reading* Watchman. He had a book, which he read by the light of his lantern; and instead of a pleasant, gave you a very uncomfortable idea of him. It seemed cruel to pitch amidst so many discomforts and privations one who had imagination enough to wish to be relieved from them. Nothing but a sluggish vacuity befits a watchman.

But the oddest of all was the *Sliding* Watchman. Think of walking up a street in the depth of a frosty winter, with long ice in the gutters, and sleet over head, and then figure to yourself a sort of bale of a man in white coming sliding towards you with a lantern in one hand, and an umbrella over his head. It was the oddest mixture of luxury and hardship, of juvenility and old age! But this looked agreeable. Animal spirits carry everything before them; and our invincible friend seemed a watchman for Rabelais. Time was run at and butted by him like a goat. The slide seemed to bear him half through the night at once; he slipped from out of his box and his commonplaces at one rush of a merry thought, and seemed to say, "Everything's in imagination;—here goes the whole weight of my office."

But we approach our home. How still the trees! How

deliciously asleep the country! How beautifully grim and nocturnal this wooded avenue of ascent against the cold white sky! The watchmen and patrols, which the careful citizens have planted in abundance within a mile of their doors, salute us with their "Good mornings";—not so welcome as we pretend; for we ought not to be out so late; and it is one of the assumptions of these fatherly old fellows to remind us of it. Some fowls, who have made a strange roost in a tree, flutter as we pass them;—another pull up the hill, unyielding; a few strides on a level; and *there* is the light in the window, the eye of the warm soul of the house—one's home. How particular, and yet how universal, is that word; and how surely does it deposit every one for himself in his own nest!

ON THE GRACES AND ANXIETIES OF PIG-DRIVING

From the perusal of this article we beg leave to warn off vulgar readers of all denominations, whether of the "great vulgar or the small." Warn, did we say? We drive them off; for Horace tells us that they, as well as pigs, are to be so treated. *Odi profanum vulgus*, says he, *et arceo*. But do thou lend thine ear, gentle shade of Goldsmith, who didst make thy bear-leader denounce "everything as is low"; and thou, Steele, who didst humanise upon public-houses and puppet-shows; and Fielding, thou whom the great Richardson, less in that matter (and some others) than thyself, did accuse of vulgarity, because thou didst discern natural gentility in a footman, and yet wast not to be taken in by the airs of Pamela and my Lady G.

The title is a little startling; but "style and sentiment," as a lady said, "can do anything." Remember, then, gentle reader, that talents are not to be despised in the humblest walks of life; we will add, nor in the muddiest. The other day we happened to be among a set of spectators who could not help stopping to admire the patience and address with which a pig-driver huddled and cherished onward his drove of unaccommodating *élèves*, down a street in the suburbs. He was a born genius for a manœuvre. Had he originated in a higher sphere he would have been a general, or a stage-manager, or, at least, the head of a set of monks. Conflicting interests were his forte; pig-headed wills, and proceedings hopeless. To see the

hand with which he did it! How hovering, yet firm; how encouraging, yet compelling; how indicative of the space on each side of him, and yet of the line before him; how general, how particular, how perfect! No barber's could quiver about a head with more lightness of apprehension; no cook's pat up and proportion the side of a pasty with a more final eye. The whales, quoth old Chapman, speaking of Neptune,

> The whales exulted under him, and knew their mighty king.

The pigs did not exult, but they knew their king. Unwilling was their subjection, but "more in sorrow than in anger." They were too far gone for rage. Their case was hopeless. They did not see why they should proceed, but they felt themselves bound to do so; forced, conglomerated, crowded onwards, irresistibly impelled by fate and Jenkins. Often would they have bolted under any other master. They squeaked and grunted as in ordinary; they sidled, they shuffled, they half stopped; they turned an eye to all the little outlets of escape; but in vain. There they stuck (for their very progress was a sort of sticking), charmed into the centre of his sphere of action, laying their heads together, but to no purpose; looking all as if they were shrugging their shoulders, and eschewing the tip-end of the whip of office. Much eye had they to their left leg; shrewd backward glances; not a little anticipative squeak and sudden rush of avoidance. It was a superfluous clutter, and they felt it; but a pig finds it more difficult than any other animal to accommodate himself to circumstances. Being out of his pale, he is in the highest state of wonderment and inaptitude. He is sluggish, obstinate, opinionate, not very social; has no desire of seeing foreign parts. Think of him in a multitude, forced to travel, and wondering what the devil it is that drives him! Judge by this of the talents of his driver.

We beheld a man once, an inferior genius, inducting a pig into the other end of Long Lane, Smithfield. He had got him thus far towards the market. It was much. His air announced success in nine parts out of ten, and hope for the remainder. It had been a happy morning's work; he had only to look for the termination of it; and he looked (as a critic of an exalted turn of mind would say) in brightness and in joy. Then would he go to the public-house, and indulge in porter and a pleasing security. Perhaps he would not say much at first, being oppressed with the greatness of his success; but by degrees, especially if interrogated, he would open, like Æneas, into all

the circumstances of his journey and the perils that beset him. Profound would be his set out; full of tremor his middle course; high and skilful his progress; glorious, though with a quickened pulse, his triumphant entry. Delicate had been his situation in Ducking Pond Row; masterly his turn at Bell Alley. We saw him with the radiance of some such thought on his countenance. He was just entering Long Lane. A gravity came upon him, as he steered his touchy convoy into this his last thoroughfare. A dog moved him into a little agitation, darting along; but he resumed his course, not without a happy trepidation, hovering as he was on the borders of triumph. The pig still required care. It was evidently a pig with all the peculiar turn of mind of his species; a fellow that would not move faster than he could help; irritable, retrospective; picking objections, and prone to boggle; a chap with a tendency to take every path but the proper one, and with a sidelong tact for the alleys.

He bolts!

He's off!—*Evasit! erupit!*

"Oh," exclaimed the man, dashing his hand against his head, lifting his knee in an agony, and screaming with all the weight of a prophecy which the spectators felt to be too true—"*He'll go up all manner of streets!*"

Poor fellow! we think of him now sometimes, driving up Duke Street, and not to be comforted in Barbican.

SPRING AND DAISIES

SPRING, while we are writing, is complete. The winds have done their work. The shaken air, well tempered and equalised, has subsided; the genial rains, however thickly they may come, do not saturate the ground beyond the power of the sun to dry it up again. There are clear crystal mornings; noons of blue sky and white cloud; nights, in which the growing moon seems to lie looking at the stars, like a young shepherdess at her flock. A few days ago she lay gazing in this manner at the solitary evening star, like Diana, on the slope of a valley, looking up at Endymion. His young eye seemed to sparkle out upon the world; while she, bending inwards, her hands behind her head, watched him with an enamoured dumbness.

But this is the quiet of Spring. Its voices and swift

movements have come back also. The swallow shoots by us, like an embodied ardour of the season. The glowing bee has his will of the honied flowers, grappling with them as they tremble. We have not yet heard the nightingale or the cuckoo; but we can hear them with our imagination, and enjoy them through the content of those who have.

Then the young green. This is the most apt and perfect mark of the season—the true issuing forth of the Spring. The trees and bushes are putting forth their crisp fans; the lilac is loaded with bud; the meadows are thick with the bright young grass, running into sweeps of white and gold with the daisies and buttercups. The orchards announce their riches, in a shower of silver blossoms. The earth in fertile woods is spread with yellow and blue carpets of primroses, violets, and hyacinths, over which the birch-trees, like stooping nymphs, hang with their thickening hair. Lilies-of-the-valley, stocks, columbines, lady-smocks, and the intensely red peony which seems to anticipate the full glow of summer-time, all come out to wait upon the season, like fairies from their subterraneous palaces.

Who is to wonder that the idea of love mingles itself with that of this cheerful and kind time of the year, setting aside even common associations? It is not only its youth, and beauty, and budding life, and "the passion of the groves," that exclaim with the poet,

> Let those love now, who never loved before;
> And those who always loved, now love the more.

All our kindly impulses are apt to have more sentiment in them than the world suspect; and it is by fetching out this sentiment, and making it the ruling association, that we exalt the impulse into generosity and refinement, instead of degrading it, as is too much the case, into what is selfish, and coarse, and pollutes all our systems. One of the greatest inspirers of love is gratitude —not merely on its common grounds, but gratitude for pleasures, whether consciously or unconsciously conferred. Thus we are thankful for the delight given us by a kind and sincere face; and if we fall in love with it, one great reason is, that we long to return what we have received. The same feeling has a considerable influence in the love that has been felt for men of talents, whose persons or address have not been much calculated to inspire it. In spring-time, joy awakens the heart: with joy awakes gratitude and nature; and in our gratitude we return, on its own principle of participation, the love that has been shown us.

This association of ideas renders solitude in spring, and solitude in winter, two very different things. In the latter, we are better content to bear the feelings of the season by ourselves: in the former, they are so sweet as well as so overflowing, that we long to share them. Shakespeare, in one of his sonnets, describes himself as so identifying the beauties of the Spring with the thought of his absent mistress, that he says he forgot them in their own character, and played with them only as with her shadow. See how exquisitely he turns a commonplace into this fancy; and what a noble, brief portrait of April he gives us at the beginning. There is indeed a wonderful mixture of softness and strength in almost every one of the lines.

> From you have I been absent in the spring,
> When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,
> Hath put a spirit of youth in everything;
> That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
> Yet not the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
> Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
> Could make me any summer's story tell,
> Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
> Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,
> Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose:
> They were but sweet, but patterns of delight,
> Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
> Yet seemed it winter still; and, you away,
> As with your shadow, I with these did play.

Shakespeare was fond of alluding to April. He did not allow May to have all his regard, because she was richer, Perdita, crowned with flowers, in the *Winter's Tale*, is beautifully compared to

> Flora,
> Peering in April's front.

There is a line in one of his sonnets, which, agreeably to the image he had in his mind, seems to strike up in one's face, hot and odorous, like perfume in a censer.

> In process of the seasons have I seen
> Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned.

His allusions to Spring are numerous in proportion. We all know the song containing that fine line, fresh, from the most brilliant of pallets:

> When daisies pied, and violets blue,
> And lady-smocks all silver white,
> And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,
> *Do paint the meadows with delight.*

We owe a long debt of gratitude to the daisy; and we take

this opportunity of discharging a millionth part of it. 'If we undertook to pay it all, we should have had to write such a book as is never very likely to be written—a journal of numberless happy hours in childhood, kept with the feelings of an infant and the pen of a man. For it would take, we suspect, a depth of delight and a subtlety of words to express even the vague joy of infancy, such as our learned departures from natural wisdom would find it more difficult to put together, than criticism and comfort, or an old palate and a young relish.—But knowledge is the widening and the brightening road that must conduct us back to the joys from which it led us; and which it is destined perhaps to secure and extend. We must not quarrel with its asperities, when we can help.

We do not know the Greek name of the daisy, nor do the dictionaries inform us; and we are not at present in the way of consulting books that might. We always like to see what the Greeks say to these things, because they had a sentiment in their enjoyments. The Latins called the daisy Bellis or Bellus, as much as to say Nice One. With the French and Italians it has the same name as a Pearl—Marguerite, Margarita, or, by way of endearment, Margheretina. The same word was the name of a woman, and occasioned infinite intermixtures of compliment about pearls, daisies, and fair mistresses. Chaucer, in his beautiful poem of the *Flower and the Leaf*, which is evidently imitated from some French poetess, says,

> And at the laste there began anon
> A lady for to sing right womanly
> A Margaret in praising the daisie,
> For as me thought among her notes sweet,
> She said "Si douset est la Margarete."

"The Margaret is so sweet." Our Margaret, however, in this allegorical poem, is undervalued in comparison with the laurel; yet Chaucer perhaps was partly induced to translate it on account of its making the figure that it does; he for has informed us more than once, in a very particular manner, that it was his favourite flower. He says that he finds it ever new, and that he shall love it till his "heart dies"; and afterwards, with a natural picture of his resting on the grass,

> Adown full softèley I gan to sink,
> And leaning on my elbow and my side,
> The long day I shope me for to abide
> For nothing else, and I shall not lie,
> But for to look upon the daisie;
> That well by reason men it call may
> The daisie, or else the eye of day.

This etymology, which we have no doubt is the real one, is repeated by Ben. Jonson, who takes occasion to spell the word "days-eyes." adding, with his usual tendency to overdo a matter of learning,

> Days-eyes, and the lippes of cows,

videlicet, cowslips: which is a disentanglement of compounds, in the style of our pleasant parodists

> ——Puddings of the plum,
> And fingers of the lady.

Mr. Wordsworth introduces his homage to the daisy with a passage from George Wither; which, as it is an old favourite of ours, and extremely applicable both to this article and our whole work, we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of repeating. It is the more interesting, inasmuch as it was written in prison, where the freedom of the author's opinions had thrown him. He is speaking of his Muse, or Imagination.

> Her divine skill taught me this;
> That from everything I saw
> I could some instruction draw,
> And raise pleasure to the height
> From the meanest object's sight.
> By the murmur of a spring,
> Or the least bough's rustelling;
> By a daisy, whose leaves spread
> Shut, when Titan goes to bed;
> Or a shady bush or tree;
> She could more infuse in me,
> Than all Nature's beauties can
> In some other wiser man.

Mr. Wordsworth undertakes to patronise the *Celandine,* because nobody else will notice it; which is a good reason. But though he tells us, in a startling piece of information, that

> Poets, vain men in their mood,
> Travel with the multitude,

yet he falls in with his old brethren of England and Normandy, and becomes loyal to the daisy.

Mr. Wordsworth calls the daisy "an unassuming commonplace of Nature," which it is; and he praises it very becomingly for discharging its duties so cheerfully, in that universal character. But we cannot agree with him in thinking that it has a "homely face." Not that we should care if it had; for homeliness does not make ugliness; but we appeal to everybody, whether it is proper to say this of *la belle Marguerite.* In the first place, its shape is very pretty and slender, but not too

much so. Then it has a boss of gold, set round and irradiated with silver points. Its yellow and fair white are in so high a taste of contrast, that Spenser has chosen the same colours for a picture of Leda reposing:

> Oh wondrous skill and sweet wit of the man!
> That her in daffodillies sleeping laid,
> From scorching heat her dainty limbs to shade.

It is for the same reason that the daisy, being chiefly white, makes such a beautiful show in company with the buttercup. But this is not all; for look at the back, and you find its fair petals blushing with a most delightful red. And how compactly and delicately is the neck set in green! *Belle et douce Marguerite, aimable sœur du roi Kingcup*, we would tilt for thee with a hundred pens, against the stoutest poet that did not find perfection in thy cheek.

But here somebody may remind us of the spring showers, and what drawbacks they are upon going into the fields.—Not at all so, when the spring is really confirmed, and the showers but April-like and at intervals. Let us turn our imaginations to the bright side of Spring, and we shall forget the showers. You see they have been forgotten just this moment. Besides, we are not likely to stray too far into the fields; and if we should, are there not hats, bonnets, barns, cottages, elm-trees, and good wills? We may make these things zests, if we please, instead of drawbacks.

WINDOWS

The other day a butterfly came into our room and began beating himself against the upper panes of a window half open, thinking to get back. It is a nice point—relieving your butterfly—he is a creature so delicate. If you handle him without ceremony, you bring away on your fingers something which you take to be down, but which is plumes of feathers; and as there are no fairies at hand, two atoms high, to make pens of the quills, and write "articles" on the invisible, there would be a loss. Mr. Bentham's ghost would visit us, shaking his venerable locks at such unnecessary-pain-producing and reasonable-pleasure-preventing heedlessness. Then if you brush him downwards, you stand a chance of hurting his antennæ, or feelers, and of not knowing

what mischief you may do to his eyes, or his sense of touch, or his instruments of dialogue; for some philosophers hold that insects talk with their feelers as dumb people do with their fingers. However, some suffering must be hazarded in order to prevent worse, even to the least and most delicate of Heaven's creatures, who would not know pleasure if they did not know pain; and perhaps the merrier and happier they are in general, the greater the lumps of pain they can bear. Besides, all must have their share, or how would the burden of the great blockish necessity be equally distributed: and finally, what business had little Papilio to come into a place unfit for him, and get bothering himself with glass? Oh, faith!—your butterfly must learn experience, as well as your Buonaparte.

There was he, beating, fluttering, flouncing,—wondering that he could not get through so clear a matter (for so glass appears to be to insects as well as to men), and tearing his silken little soul out with ineffectual energy. What plumage he must have left upon the pane! What feathers and colours, strewed about, as if some fine lady had gone mad against a ball-room door, for not being let in!

But we had a higher simile for him than that. "Truly," thought we, "little friend, thou art like some of the great German transcendentalists, who, in thinking to reach at heaven by an impossible way (such at least it seemeth at present), run the hazard of cracking their brains, and spoiling their wings for ever; whereas, if thou and they would but stoop a little lower, and begin with earth first, there, before thee, lieth open heaven as well as earth; and thou mayest mount high as thou wilt, after thy own happy fashion, thinking less and enjoying all things."

And hereupon we contrived to get him downwards,—and forth out into the air sprang he,—first against the lime-trees, and then over them into the blue ether,—as if he had resolved to put our advice into practice.

We have before spoken of the fret and fury into which the common fly seems to put himself against a window. Bees appear to take it more patiently, out of a greater knowledge; and slip about with a strange air of hopelessness. They seem to "give it up." These things, as Mr. Pepys said of the humanities at court, "it is pretty to observe." Glass itself is a phenomenon that might alone serve a reflecting observer with meditation for a whole morning,—so substantial and yet so air-like, so close and compact to keep away the cold, yet so transparent and

facile to let in light, the gentlest of all things,—so palpably *something*, and yet to the eye and the perceptions a kind of *nothing*! It seems absolutely to deceive insects in this respect, which is remarkable, considering how closely they handle it, and what microscopic eyes we suppose them to have. We should doubt (as we used to do) whether we did not mistake their ideas on the subject, if we had not so often seen their repeated dashings of themselves against the panes, their stoppings (as if to take breath), and then their recommencement of the same violence. It is difficult to suppose that they do this for mere pleasure, for it looks as if they must hurt themselves. Observe in particular the tremendous thumps given himself by that great hulking fellow of a fly, that Ajax of the Diptera, the blue bottle. Yet in autumn, in their old age, flies congregate in windows as elsewhere, and will take the matter so quietly as sometimes to stand still for hours together. We suppose they love the warmth, or the light; and that either they have found out the secret as to the rest, or

Years have brought the philosophic mind.

Why should Fly plague himself any longer with household matters which he cannot alter? He has tried hard in his time; and now he resigns himself like a wise insect, and will taste whatsoever tranquil pleasures remain for him, without beating his brains or losing his temper any longer. In natural livers, pleasure survives pain. Even the artificial, who keep up their troubles so long by pride, self-will, and the want of stimulants, contrive to get more pleasure than is supposed out of pain itself, especially by means of thinking themselves ill-used, and of grumbling. If the heart (for want of better training) does not much keep up its action with them, the spleen does; and so there is action of some sort: and whenever there is action, there is life; and life is found to have something valuable in it for its own sake, apart from ordinary considerations either of pain or pleasure. But your fly and your philosopher are for pleasure too, to the last, if it be harmless. Give old Musca a grain of sugar, and see how he will put down his proboscis to it, and dot, and pound, and suck it in, and be as happy as an old West India gentleman pondering on his sugar cane and extracting a pleasure out of some dulcet recollection.

Gamblers, for want of a sensation, have been known to start up from their wine, and lay a bet upon two rain-drops coming down a pane of glass. How poor are those gentry, even when

they win, compared with observers whose resources need never fail them! To the latter, if they please, the rain-drop itself is a world,—a world of beauty and mystery and aboriginal idea, bringing before them a thousand images of proportion, and reflection, and the elements, and light, and colour, and roundness, and delicacy, and fluency, and beneficence, and the refreshed flowers, and the growing corn, and dew-drops on the bushes, and the tears that fall from gentle eyes, and the ocean and the rainbow, and the origin of all things. In water we behold one of the old primeval mysteries of which the world was made. Thus, the commonest rain-drop on a pane of glass becomes a visitor from the solitudes of time.

A window, to those who have read a little in Nature's school, thus becomes a book or a picture, on which her genius may be studied, handicraft though the canvas be, and little as the glazier may have thought of it. Not that we are to predicate ignorance of your glazier nowadays, any more than of other classes that compose the various readers of penny and three-halfpenny philosophy,—cheap visitor, like the sunbeams, of houses of all sorts. The glazier could probably give many a richer man information respecting his glass, and his diamond, and his putty (no anti-climax in these analytical days), and let him into a secret or two, besides, respecting the amusement to be derived from it. (We have just got up from our work to inform ourselves of the nature and properties of the said mystery, putty; and should blush for the confession, if the blush would not imply that a similar ignorance were less common with us than it is.)

But a window is a frame for other pictures besides its own; sometimes for moving ones, as in the instance of a cloud going along, or a bird, or a flash of lightning; sometimes for the distant landscape, sometimes the nearer one, or the trees that are close to it, with their lights and shades; often for the passing multitude. A picture, a harmony, is observable, even in the drapery of the curtains that invest it; much more in the sunny vine-leaves or roses that may be visible on the borders, or that are trailed against it, and which render many a poor casement so pleasant. The other day, in a very humble cottage window in the suburbs, we saw that beautiful plant, the nasturtium, trained over it on several strings; which must have furnished the inmates with a screen as they sate at their work or at their tea inside, and at the same time permitted them to see through into the road, thus constituting a far better blind than is to be

found in many great houses. Sights like these give a favourable impression of the dispositions and habits of the people within, —show how superior they are to their sophistications, if rich, and how possessed of natural refinement, if among the poorer classes. Oh! the human mind is a fine graceful thing everywhere, if the music of nature does but seize its attention, and throw it into its natural attitude. But so little has the "schoolmaster" yet got hold of this point, or made way with it, and so occupied are men with digging gold out of the ground, and neglecting the other treasures which they toss about in profusion during the operation (as if the clay were better than the flowers which it produced), that few make the most of the means and appliances for enjoyment that lie round about them, even in their very walls and rooms. Look at the windows down a street, and generally speaking they are all barren. The inmates might see through roses and geraniums, if they would; but they do not think of it, or not with loving knowledge enough to take the trouble. Those who have the advantage of living in the country or the suburbs, are led in many instances to do better, though their necessity for agreeable sights is not so great. But the presence of Nature tempts them to imitate her. There are few windows anywhere which might not be used to better advantage than they are, if we have a little money, or can procure even a few seeds. We have read an art of blowing the fire. There is an art even in the shutting and opening of windows. People might close them more against dull objects, and open them more to pleasant ones, and to the air. For a few pence they might have beautiful colours and odours, and a pleasing task, emulous of the showers of April, beneficent as May; for they who cultivate flowers in their windows (as we have hinted before) are led instinctively to cultivate them for others as well as themselves; nay, in one respect they do it more so; for you may observe that wherever there is this "fenestral horticulture" (as Evelyn would have called your window-gardening), the flowers are turned with their faces towards the street.

But "there is an art in the shutting and opening of windows." —Yes, for the sake of air (which ought to be had night as well as day, in reasonable measure, and with precautions), and for the sake of excluding, or admitting, what is to be seen out of doors. Suppose, for example, a house is partly opposite some pleasant, and partly some unpleasant, object; the one, a tree or garden; the other, a gin-shop or a squalid lane. The sight

of the first should be admitted as constantly as possible, and with open window. That of the other, if you are rich enough, can be shut out with a painted blind, that shall substitute a beautiful landscape for the nuisance, or a blind of another sort will serve the purpose; or if even a blind cannot be afforded, the shutters may be partly closed. Shutters should always be divided in two, horizontally, as well as otherwise, for purposes of this kind. It is sometimes pleasant to close the lower portion, if only to preserve a greater sense of quiet and seclusion, and to read or write the more to yourself; light from above having both a softer and stronger effect than when admitted from all quarters. We have seen shutters, by judicious management in this way, in the house of a poor man who had a taste for nature, contribute to the comfort and even elegance of a room in a surprising manner, and (by the opening of the lower portions and the closure of the upper) at once shut out all the sun that was not wanted, and convert a row of stunted trees into an appearance of interminable foliage, as thick as if it had been in a forest.

"But the *fact* was otherwise," cries some fastidious personage, more nice than wise; "you knew there was *no forest*, and therefore could not have been deceived."

"Well, my dear sir, but deception is not necessary to everyone's pleasure; and *fact* is not merely what you take it for. The fact of there being no forest might have been the only fact with yourself, and so have prevented the enjoyment; but to a livelier fancy there would have been the fact of the imagination, of the forest (for everything is a fact which *does* anything for us), and there would also have been the fact of having cultivated the imagination, and the fact of our willingness to be pleased, and the fact of the books we have read, and above all, the fact of the positive satisfaction. If a man be pleased, it is in vain you tell him he has no cause to be pleased. The cause is proved by the consequence. Whether the cause be rightly or wrongly cultivated is another matter. The good of it is assumed in the present instance; and it would take more facts than are in the possession of a 'mere matter-of-fact man' to disprove it. Matter of fact and spirit of fact must both be appreciated, in order to do justice to the riches of nature. We are made of mind as well as body,—of imagination as well as senses. The same mysterious faculty which sees what is before the eyes, sees also what is suggested to the memory. Matter of fact is only the more palpable world, around which a thousand spirits

of fact are playing, like angels in a picture. Not to see both is to be a poor unattended creature, who walks about in the world conscious of nothing but himself, or at best of what the horse-jockey and the coach-maker has done for him. If his banker fails, he is ruined! Not so those who, in addition to the resources of their industry, have stock in all the *banks* of nature and art (pardon us this pun for the sake of what grows on it), and whose consolations cannot wholly fail them, as long as they have a flower to look upon, and a blood not entirely vitiated."

A window high up in a building, and commanding a fine prospect, is a sort of looking out of the air, and gives a sense of power, and of superiority to earth. The higher also you go, the healthier. We speak of such windows as Milton fancied, when he wished that his lamp should be seen at midnight in "some high lonely tower"; a passage justly admired for the good-nature as well as loftiness of the wish, thus desiring that wayfarers should be the better for his studies, and enjoy the evidence of their fellow-creature's vigils. But elevations of this kind are not readily to be had. As to health, we believe that a very little lift above the ground-floor, and so on as you ascend, grows healthier in proportion. *Malaria* (bad air) in the countries where a plague of that kind is prevalent, is understood to be confined to a certain distance from the earth; and we really believe, that even in the healthiest quarters, where no positive harm is done by nearness to it, the air is better as the houses ascend, and a seat in a window becomes valuable in proportion. By and by, perhaps, studies and other favourite sitting-rooms will be built accordingly; and more retrospective reverence be shown to the "garrets" that used to be so famous in the annals of authorship. The poor poet in Pope, who lay

> High in Drury Lane,
> Lull'd by soft zephyrs through the broken pane,

was better off there than if he had occupied the ground-floor. For our parts, in order that we may save the dignity of our three-halfpenny meditations, and at the same time give evidence of practising what we preach, we shall finish by stating, that we have written this article in a floor neither high enough to be so poetical, nor low enough for too earthly a prose,—in a little study made healthy by an open window, and partly screened from overlookers by a bit of the shutter, while our look-out presents us with a world of green leaves, and a red cottage top,

a gothic tower of a church in the distance, and a glorious apple-tree close at hand, laden with its yellow balls.

Studded with apples, a beautiful show.

Some kindness of this sort Fortune has never failed to preserve to us, as if in return for the love we bear to her rolling globe; and now that the sincerity of our goodwill has become known, none seem inclined to grudge it us, or to dispute the account to which we may turn it, for others as well as ourselves.

BREAKFAST IN SUMMER

"BREAKFAST in Summer!" cries a reader, in some narrow street in a city: "that means, I suppose, a breakfast out of doors, among trees; or, at least, in some fine breakfast-room, looking upon a lawn, or into a conservatory. I have no such breakfast-room; the article is not written for me. However, let us see what it says;—let us see whether, according to our friend's receipt,

> One can hold
> A silver-fork, and breast of pheasant on't,
> By thinking of sheer tea, and bread and butter.

Nay let us do him justice too. Fancy is a good thing, though pheasant may be better. Come, let us see what he says;—let us look at his Barmecide breakfast;—at all the good things I am to eat and drink without tasting them."

Editor. Reader, thou art one of the right sort. Thy fancy is large, though thy street be narrow. In one thing only do we find thee deficient. Thy faith is not perfect.

Reader. How? Am I not prepared to enjoy what I cannot have? And do I not know the Barmecide? Am I not a reader of the *Arabian Nights*—a willing visitor of that facetious personage who set the imaginary feast before the poor, hungry devil Shacabac, and made him drunk with invisible wine, till, in the retributive intoxication of the humour, mine host got his ears boxed?

Editor. Hallo—what is that you are saying?—Oh, you "intend nothing personal." Well, it is luckily added; for, look you—we should otherwise have "heaped coals of fire on your head." The want of faith we complain of is not the want

of faith in books and fancies, but in us and our intentions towards thyself; for how camest thou to suppose that we intended omitting thy breakfast—thy unsophisticated cup of bohea, and most respectable bread and butter? Why, it is of and to such breakfasts that we write most. The others, unless their refinement be of the true, universal sort, might fancy they could do without us; whereas those that really can do so, are not unwilling to give us reception, for sympathy's sake, if for nothing else. To enjoy is to reciprocate. We have the honour (in this our paper person) of appearing at some of the most refined breakfast-tables in the kingdom, some of these being at the same time the richest, and some the poorest, that epicure could seek or eschew; that is to say, unintellectual epicure; and when such a man is found at either, we venture to affirm that he misses the best things to be found near him. It does not become us to name names; but we may illustrate the matter by saying, that, had it been written forty years back, we have good reason to think that the intentions of this our set of essays would have procured it no contemptuous welcome at the breakfast-table of Fox with his lords about him, or Burns with his "bonny Jeanie" at his side. Porcelain, or potter's clay, silver or pewter, potted meats, oatmeal, or bacon, are all one to us, provided there is a good appetite, *and a desire to make the best of what is before us*. Without that, who would breakfast with the richest of fools? And with it, who that knows the relish of wit and good-humour would not sit down to the humblest fare with inspired poverty?

Now *the art of making the best of what is before us* (not in forgetfulness of social advancement, but in encouragement of it, and in aid of the requisite activity or patience, as the case may require) is one of the main objects of this publication; and as the commoner breakfast seems to require it most, it is to such tables the present paper is chiefly addressed,—always supposing that the breakfaster is of an intelligent sort; and not without a hope of suggesting a pleasant fancy or so to the richest tables that may want it. And there are too many such!—perhaps because the table has too many "good things" on it already,—too much potted gout, and twelve-shilling irritability.

Few people, rich or poor, make the most of what they possess. In their anxiety to increase the amount of the means for future enjoyment, they are too apt to lose sight of the capability of them for present. Above all, they overlook the thousand helps to enjoyment which lie round about them, free to everybody,

and obtainable by the very willingness to be pleased, assisted by that fancy and imagination which Nature has bestowed, more or less, upon all human beings. Some miscalled Utilitarians, incapable of their own master's doctrine, may affect to undervalue fancy and imagination, as though they were not constituent properties of the human mind, and as if they themselves, the mistakers, did not enjoy even what they do by their very assistance! Why, they have fancies for this or that teacup, this or that coat, this or that pretty face! They get handsome wives, when they can, as well as other people, and when plain ones would be quite as "useful!" How is that? They pretend to admire the *green* fields, the *blue* sky, and would be ashamed to be insensible to the merits of the flowers. How can they take upon them to say where the precise line should be drawn, and at what point it is we are to cease turning these perceptions of pleasure and elegance to account?

The first requisite towards enjoying a breakfast, or anything else, is the willingness to be pleased; and the greatest proof and security of this willingness is the willingness to please others. "Better" (says a venerable text) "is a dinner of herbs, where peace is, than a stalled ox with contention." Many a breakfast, that has every other means of enjoyment, is turned to bitterness by unwilling, discordant looks, perhaps to the great misery of some persons present, who would give and receive happiness if at any other table. Now, breakfast is a foretaste of the whole day. Spoil that, and we probably spoil all. Begin it well, and if we are not very silly, or ill-taught persons indeed, and at the mercy of every petty impulse of anger and offence, we in all probability make the rest of the day worthy of it. These petty impulses are apt to produce great miseries. And the most provoking part of the business is, that for want of better teaching, or of a little forethought, or imagination, they are sometimes indulged in by people of good hearts, who would be ready to tear their hair for anguish, if they saw you wounded or in a fit, and yet will make your days a heap of wretchedness, by the eternal repetition of these absurdities.

It being premised, then, that persons must come to breakfast without faces sour enough to turn the milk (and we begin to think that our cautions on this head are unnecessary to such readers as are likely to patronise us), we have to inform the most unpretending breakfaster—the man the least capable of potted meats, partridges, or preserves,—that in the commonest

tea-equipage and fare which is set upon his board, he possesses a treasure of pleasant thoughts; and that if he can command but the addition of a flower, or a green bough, or a book, he may add to them a visible grace and luxury, such as the richest wits in the nation would respect.

"True taste," says one of these very persons (Mr. Rogers, in his notes to a poem), "is an excellent economist. She delights in producing great effects by small means." This maxim holds good, we see, even amidst the costliest elegancies; how much more is it precious to those whose means are of necessity small, while their hearts are large? Suppose the reader is forced to be an economist, and to have nothing on his breakfast-table but plain tea and bread and butter. Well; he is not forced also to be sordid, or wretched, or without fancy, love, or intelligence. Neither are his tea-cups forced to be ill-shaped, nor his bread and butter ill-cut, nor his table-cloth dirty; and shapeliness and cleanliness are in themselves elegancies, and of no mean order. The spirit of all other elegance is in them,—that of selectness,—of the superiority to what is unfit and superfluous. Besides, a breakfast of this kind is the preference, or good old custom, of thousands who could afford a richer one. It may be called the staple breakfast of England; and he who cannot make an excellent meal of it, would be in no very good way with the luxuries of a George the Fourth, still less with the robust meats of a huntsman. Delicate appetites may reasonably be stimulated a little, till regularity and exercise put them in better order; and nothing is to be said against the innocencies of honeys and marmalades. But strong meats of a morning are only for those who take strong exercise, or who have made up their minds to defy the chances of gout and corpulence, or the undermining predigestion of pill-taking.

If the man of taste is able to choose his mode of breakfasting in summer-time, he will of course invest it with all the natural luxuries within his reach. He will have it in a room, looking upon grass and trees, hung with paintings, and furnished with books. He will sit with a beautiful portrait beside him, and the air shall breathe freshly into his room, the sun shall colour the foliage at his window, and shine betwixt their chequering shadows upon the table; and the bee shall come to partake the honey he has made for him.

But suppose that a man capable of relishing all these good things does not possess one of them,—at least can command none that require riches. Nay, suppose him destitute of every-

thing but the plainest fare, in the plainest room, and in the least accommodating part of the city. What does he do? Or what, upon reflection, may he be led to do? Why, his taste will have recourse to its own natural and acquired riches, and make the utmost it can out of the materials before it. It will show itself superior to that of thousands of ignorant rich men, and make its goodwill and its knowledge open sources of entertainment to him unknown, to treasures which they want the wit to unlock. Be willing to be pleased, and the power will come. Be a reader, getting all the information you can; and every fresh information will paint some commonplace article for you with brightness. Such a man as we have described will soon learn not to look upon the commonest table or chair without deriving pleasure from its shape or shapeability; nor on the cheapest and most ordinary tea-cup, without increasing that gratification with fifty amusing recollections of books, and plants, and colours, and strange birds, and the quaint domesticities of the Chinese.

For instance, if he breakfasts in a room of the kind just mentioned (which is putting the case as strongly as we can, and implies all the greater comforts that can be drawn from situations of a better kind), he will select the snuggest or least cheerless part of the room to set his table in. If he can catch a glimpse of a tree from any part of a window (and a great many more such glimpses are to be had in the city than people would suppose), he will plant his chair, if possible, within view of it; or if no tree is to be had, perhaps the morning sun comes into his room, and he will contrive that his table shall have a slice of that. He will not be unamused even with the Jack-o'-lantern which strikes up to the ceiling, and dances with the stirring of his tea, glancing and twinkling like some chuckling elfin eye, or reminding him of some wit making his brilliant reflections, and casting a light upon commonplaces. The sun is ever beautiful and noble, and brings a cheerfulness out of heaven itself into the humblest apartment, if we have but the spirit to welcome it.

But if we have neither tree nor sun, and nobody with us to make amends, suppose it winter-time, and that we have a fire. This is sun and company too, and such an associate as will either talk with us, if we choose to hear it, or leave us alone, and give us comfort unheard. It is now summer-time, however, and we had better reserve our talk of fires for cold weather. Our present object is rather to point out some new modes of

making the best of imaginary wants than to dilate upon luxuries recognised by all.

Suppose, then, that neither a fire, the great friend indoors, nor sunshine, the great friend out-of-doors, be found with us in our breakfast-room,—that we could neither receive pleasure from the one, if we had it, nor can command a room into which the other makes its way,—what ornament is there,—what supply of light or beauty could we discover, at once exquisite and cheap,—that should furnish our humble board with a grace, precious in the eyes of the most intelligent among the rich? Flowers.—Set flowers on your table, a whole nosegay, if you can get it,—or but two or three,—or a single flower,—a rose, a pink, nay, a daisy. Bring a few daisies and buttercups from your last field walk, and keep them alive in a little water; aye, preserve but a bunch of clover, or a handful of flowering grass, one of the most elegant as well as cheap of nature's productions, —and you have something on your table that reminds you of the beauties of God's creation, and gives you a link with the poets and sages that have done it most honour. Put but a rose, or a lily, or a violet on your table, and *you and Lord Bacon* have a custom in common; for that great and wise man was in the habit of having the flowers in season set upon his table,—morning, we believe, noon, and night; that is to say, at all his meals; for dinner, in his time, was taken at noon; and why should he not have flowers at all his meals, seeing that they were growing all day? Now here is a fashion that shall last you for ever, if you please; never changing with silks, and velvets, and silver forks, nor dependent upon the caprice of some fine gentleman or lady, who have nothing but caprice and change to give them importance and a sensation. The fashion of the garments of heaven and earth endures for ever, and you may adorn your table with specimens of their drapery,—with flowers out of the fields, and golden beams out of the blue ether.

Flowers on a morning table are specially suitable to the time. They look like the happy wakening of the creation; they bring the perfumes of the breath of nature into your room; they seem the representations and embodiments of the very smiles of your home, the graces of its good-morrow,—proofs that some intellectual beauty is in ourselves, or those about us; some house Aurora (if we are so lucky as to have such a companion) helping to strew life our with sweets, or in ourselves some masculine mildness not unworthy to possess such a companion, or unlikely to gain her.

Even a few leaves, if we can get no flowers, are far better than no such ornament,—a branch from the next tree, or the next herb-market, or some twigs that have been plucked from a flowering hedge. They are often — nay, always — beautiful, particularly in spring, when their green is tenderest. The first new boughs in spring, plucked and put into a water-bottle, have often an effect that may compete with flowers themselves, considering their novelty; and, indeed,

Leaves would be counted flowers, if earth had none.

(There is a verse for the reader, and not a bad one, considering its truth.) We often have vines (such as they are,—better than none) growing upon the walls of our city houses,—or clematis, or jessamine,—perhaps ivy on a bit of an old garden-wall, or a tree in a court. We should pluck a sprig of it, and plant it on our breakfast-table. It would show that the cheap elegancies of earth, the universal gifts of the beauty of nature, are not thrown away upon us. They shadow prettily over the clean table-cloth or the pastoral milk, like a piece of nature brought indoors. The tender bodies of the young vernal shoots above mentioned, put into water, might be almost fancied clustering together with a sort of virgin delicacy, like young nymphs, mute-struck, in a fountain. Nay, any leaves, not quite faded, look well, as a substitute for the want of flowers,—those of the common elm, or the plane, or the rough oak (especially when it has become gentle with its acorn tassels), or the lime, which is tasselled in a more flowery manner, and has a breath as beautiful. Ivy, which is seldom or never brought indoors, greatly deserves to be better treated, especially the young shoots of it, which point in a most elegant manner over the margin of a glass or decanter, seeming to have been newly scissored forth by some fairy hand, or by its own invisible quaint spirit, as if conscious of the tendency within it. Even the green tips of the fir-trees, which seem to have been brushed by the golden pencil of the sun, when he resumes his painting, bring a sort of light and vernal joy into a room, in default of brighter visitors. But it is not necessary to a loving and reflecting spirit to have anything so good as those. A bit of elm-tree or poplar would do, in the absence of anything rarer. For our parts, as far as ourself alone is concerned, it seems to us that we could not be mastered by the blackest storm of existence, in the worst pass that our pilgrimage could bring us to, as long as we had shelter over our heads, a table with bread and a cup of tea upon it, and a single

one of these green smiles upon the board, to show us that good-natured Nature was alive.

Does any reader misgive himself, and fancy that to help himself to such comforts as these would be "trifling"? Oh, let him not so condescend to the ignorance of the proud or envious. If this were trifling, then was Bacon a trifler, then was the great Condé a trifler, and the old Republican Ludlow, and all the great and good spirits that have loved flowers, and Milton's Adam himself—nay, Heaven itself; for Heaven made these harmless elegancies, and blessed them with the universal goodwill of the wise and innocent. To trifle is not to make use of small pleasures for the help and refreshment of our duties, but to be incapable of that real estimation of either which enables us the better to appreciate and assist both. The same mighty energy which whirls the earth round the sun, and crashes the heavens with thunderbolts, produces the lilies of the valley, and the gentle dew-drops that keep them fair.

To return, then, to our flowers and our breakfast-table,—were time and place so cruel as not to grant us even a twig, still there is a last resource, and a rich one, too,—not quite so cheap as the other, but obtainable nowadays by a few pence, and which may be said to grow also on the public walls,—a book. We read, in old stories, of enchanters who drew gardens out of snow, and of tents no bigger than a nut-shell, which opened out over a whole army. Of a like nature is the magic of a book,—a casket, from which you may draw out, at will, bowers to sit under, and affectionate beauties to sit by, and have trees, flowers, and an exquisite friend, all at one spell. We see it now before us, standing among the cups, edgeways, plain-looking, perhaps poor and battered, perhaps bought of some dull huckster in a lane for a few pence. On its back we read, in old worn-out letters of enchantment, the word "Milton"; and upon opening it, lo! we are breakfasting forthwith

> ———Betwixt two aged oaks
> On herbs and other country messes
> Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses,

in a place which they call "Allegro." Or the word on the back of the casket is "Pope," and instantly a beauty in a "*négligé*" makes breakfast for us, and we have twenty sylphs instead of butterflies tickling the air round about us, and comparing colours with the flowers, or pouncing upon the crumbs that threaten to fall upon her stomacher. Or "Thomson" is the magic name; and a friend still sweeter sits beside us, with her

eyes on ours, and tells us, with a pressure on the hand and soft, low words, that our cup awaits us. Or we cry aloud "Theocritus!" plunging into the sweetest depths of the country, and lo! we breakfast down in a thick valley of leaves and brooks and the brown summer-time, upon creams and honey-combs, the guest of bearded Pan and the Nymphs; while at a distance on his mountain-top, poor, overgrown Polyphemus, tamed and made mild with the terrible sweet face of love, which has frightened him with a sense of new thoughts, and of changes which cannot be, sits overshadowing half of the vineyards below him; and with his brow in tears, blows his harsh reeds over the the sea.

TEA-DRINKING

The very word *tea*, so petty, so infantine, so winking-eyed, so expressive, somehow or other, of something inexpressibly minute and satisfied with a little (*tee !*), resembles the idea one has (perhaps a very mistaken one) of that extraordinary people, of whom Europeans know little or nothing, except that they sell us this preparation, bow back again our ambassadors, have a language consisting only of a few hundred words, gave us *China*-ware and the strange pictures on our tea-cups, made a certain progress in civilisation long before we did, mysteriously stopped at it and would go no further, and, if numbers and the customs of "venerable ancestors" are to carry the day, are at once the most populous and the most respectable nation on the face of the earth. As a population they certainly are a most enormous and wonderful body; but, as individuals, their ceremonies, their trifling edicts, their jealousy of foreigners, and their tea-cup representations of themselves (which are the only ones popularly known), impress us irresistibly with a fancy that they are a people all toddling, little-eyed, little-footed, little-bearded, little-minded, quaint, overweening, pig-tailed, bald-headed, cone-capped or pagoda-hatted, having childish houses and temples with bells at every corner and story, and shuffling about in blue landscapes, over "nine-inch bridges," with little mysteries of bell-hung whips in their hands,—a boat, or a house, or a tree, made of a pattern, being over their heads or underneath them (as the case may happen), and a bird as

large as the boat, always having a circular white space to fly in. Such are the Chinese of the tea-cups and the grocers' windows, and partly of their own novels, too, in which everything seems as little as their eyes, little odes, little wine-parties, and a series of little satisfactions. However, it must be owned, that from these novels one gradually acquires a notion that there is a great deal more good sense and even good poetry among them than one had fancied from the accounts of embassies and the autobiographical paintings on the China-ware; and this is the most probable supposition. An ancient and great nation, as civilised as they, is not likely to be so much behindhand with us in the art of living as our self-complacency leads us to imagine. If their contempt of us amounts to the barbarous, perhaps there is a greater share of barbarism than we suspect in our scorn of them.

At all events, it becomes us to be grateful for their tea. What a curious thing it was, that all of a sudden the remotest nation of the East, otherwise unknown, and foreign to all our habits, should convey to us a domestic custom which changed the face of our morning refreshments; and that, instead of ale and meat, or wine, all the polite part of England should be drinking a Chinese infusion, and setting up earthenware in their houses, painted with preposterous scenery! We shall not speak contemptuously, for our parts, of any such changes in the history of a nation's habits, any more than of the changes of the wind, which now comes from the west, and now from the east, doubtless for some good purpose. It may be noted, that the introduction of tea-drinking followed the diffusion of books among us, and the growth of more sedentary modes of life. The breakfasters upon cold beef and "cool tankards" were an active, horse-riding generation. Tea-drinking times are more indoor, given to reading, and are riders in carriages, or manufacturers at the loom or the steam-engine. It may be taken as an axiom, —the more sedentary, the more tea-drinking. The conjunction is not the best in the world; but it is natural, till something better be found. Tea-drinking is better than dram-drinking: a practice which, if our memory does not deceive us, was creeping in among the politest and even the fairest circles, during the transition from ales to teas. When the late Mr. Hazlitt, by an effort worthy of him, suddenly left off the stiff glasses of brandy-and-water by which he had been tempted to prop up his disappointments, or rather to loosen his tongue at the pleasant hour of supper, he took to tea-drinking; and it must be

owned, was latterly tempted to make himself as much amends as he could for his loss of excitement in the quantity he allowed himself; but it left his mind free to exercise its powers;—it "kept," as Waller beautifully says of it,

The palace of the soul serene;

not, to be sure, the quantity, but the tea itself, compared with the other drink. The prince of tea-drinkers was Dr. Johnson, one of the most sedentary of men, and the most unhealthy. It is to be feared his quantity suited him still worse; though the cups, of which we hear such multitudinous stories about him, were very small in his time. It was he that wrote, or rather *effused*, the humorous request for tea, in ridicule, of the style of the old ballads (things, be it said without irreverence, which he did not understand so well as "his cups"). The verses were extempore, and addressed to Mrs. Thrale:

And now, I pray thee, Hetty dear,
That thou wilt give to me,
With cream and sugar soften'd well
Another dish of tea.

But hear, alas! this mournful truth,
Nor hear it with a frown,—
Thou canst not make the tea so fast
As I can gulp it down.

Now this is among the pleasures of reading and reflecting men over their breakfast, or on any other occasion. The sight of what is a tiresome nothing to others, shall suggest to them a hundred agreeable recollections and speculations. There is a tea-cup!" a simpleton might cry;—"it holds my tea—that's all." Yes, that's all to you and your poverty-stricken brain; we hope you are rich and prosperous, to make up for it as well as you can. But to the right tea-drinker, the cup, we see, contains not only recollections of eminent brethren of the bohea, but the whole Chinese nation, with all its history, Lord Macartney included; nay, for that matter, Ariosto and his beautiful story of Angelica and Medora; for Angelica was a Chinese; and then collaterally come in the Chinese neighbours and conquerors from Tartary, with Chaucer's

—Story of Cambuscan bold,

and the travels of Marco Polo and others, and the Jesuit missionaries, and the Japanese with our friend Golownin, and the Loo Choo people, and Confucius, whom Voltaire (to show his learning) delights to call by his proper native appellation of

Kong-foo-tsee (reminding us of Congo tea); and then we have the *Chinese Tales*, and Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*, and Goldsmith brings you back to Johnson again and the tea-drinkings of old times; and then we have the *Rape of the Lock* before us, with Belinda at breakfast, and Lady Wortley Montague's tea-table eclogue, and the domestic pictures in the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, with the passions existing in those times for china-ware, and Horace Walpole, who was an old woman in that respect; and, in short, a thousand other memories, grave and gay, poetical and prosaical, all ready to wait upon anybody who chooses to read books, like spirits at the command of the book-readers of old, who, for the advantages they had over the rest of the world, got the title of Magicians.

Yea, pleasant and rich is thy sight, little tea-cup (large, though, at breakfast), round, smooth, and coloured;—composed of delicate earth,—like the earth, producing flowers, and birds, and men; and containing within thee thy Lilliputian ocean, which we, after sending our fancy sailing over it, past islands of foam called "sixpences," and mysterious bubbles from below, will, giant-like, engulf;—

But hold—there's a fly in.

Now, why could not this inconsiderate monster of the air be content with the whole space of the heavens round about him, but he must needs plunge into this scalding pool? Did he scent the sugar? or was it a fascination of terror from the heat? "Hadst thou my three kingdoms to range in," said James the First to a fly, "and yet must needs get into my eye?" It was a good-natured speech, and a natural. It shows that the monarch did his best to get the fly out again; at least we hope so; and therefore we follow the royal example in extricating the little winged wretch, who has struggled hard with his unavailing pinions, and become drenched and lax with the soaking. He is on the dry, clean cloth. Is he dead? No:—the tea was not so hot as we supposed it:—see, he gives a heave of himself forward; then endeavours to drag a leg up, then another, then stops, and sinks down, saturated and overborne with wateriness; and assuredly, from the inmost soul of him, he sighs (if flies sigh,—which we think they must do sometimes, after attempting in vain, for half an hour, to get through a pane of glass). However, his sigh is as much mixed with joy as fright and astonishment and a horrible hot bath can let it be; and the heat has not been too much for him; a similar case would have been worse for one of us with our fleshy bodies;—for see! after

dragging himself along the dry cloth, he is fairly on his legs; he smoothes himself, like a cat, first on one side, then the other, only with his legs instead of his tongue; then rubs the legs together, partly to disengage them of their burthen, and partly as if he congratulated himself on his escape; and now, finally, opening his wings (beautiful privilege! for all wings, except the bat's, seem beautiful, and a privilege, and fit for envy), he is off again into the air, as if nothing had happened.

He may forget it, being an inconsiderate and giddy fly; but it is to us, be it remembered by our conscience, that he owes all which he is hereafter to enjoy. His suctions of sugar, his flights, his dances on the window, his children, yea, the whole House of Fly, as far as it depends on him their ancestor, will be owing to us. We have been his providence, his guardian angel, the invisible being that rescued him without his knowing it. What shall we add, reader? Wilt thou laugh, or look placid and content,—humble, and yet in some sort proud withal, and not consider it as an unbecoming meeting of ideas in these our most mixed and reflective papers,—if we argue from rescued flies to rescued human beings, and take occasion to hope, that in the midst of the struggling endeavours of such of us as have to wrestle with fault or misfortune, invisible pity may look down with a helping eye upon ourselves, and that what it is humane to do in the man, it is divine to do in that which made humanity.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON SLEEP

This is an article for the reader to think of when he or she is warm in bed, a little before he goes to sleep, the clothes at his ear, and the wind moaning in some distant crevice.

"Blessings," exclaimed Sancho, "on him that first invented sleep! It wraps a man all round like a cloak." It is a delicious moment certainly—that of being well nestled in bed, and feeling that you shall drop gently to sleep. The good is to come, not past: the limbs have been just tired enough to render the remaining in one posture delightful: the labour of the day is done. A gentle failure of the perceptions comes creeping over one:—the spirit of consciousness disengages itself more and more, with slow and hushing degrees, like a mother detaching her hand from that of her sleeping child;—the mind seems to

have a balmy lid closing over it, like the eye;—'tis closing;—'tis more closing;—'tis closed. The mysterious spirit has gone to take its airy rounds.

It is said that sleep is best before midnight: and Nature herself, with her darkness and chilling dews, informs us so. There is another reason for going to bed betimes; for it is universally acknowledged that lying late in the morning is a great shortener of life. At least, it is never found in company with longevity. It also tends to make people corpulent. But these matters belong rather to the subject of early rising than of sleep.

Sleep at a late hour in the morning is not half so pleasant as the more timely one. It is sometimes, however, excusable, especially to a watchful or overworked head; neither can we deny the seducing merits of "t' other doze,"—the pleasing wilfulness of nestling in a new posture, when you know you ought to be up, like the rest of the house. But then you cut up the day, and your sleep the next night.

In the course of the day few people think of sleeping, except after dinner; and then it is often rather a hovering and nodding on the borders of sleep than sleep itself. This is a privilege allowable, we think, to none but the old, or the sickly, or the very tired and care-worn; and it should be well understood it is exercised in company. To escape into slumber from an argument; or to take it as an affair of course, only between you and your biliary duct; or to assent with involuntary nods to all that you have just been disputing, is not so well; much less, to sit nodding and tottering beside a lady; or to be in danger of dropping your head into the fruit-plate or your host's face; or of waking up, and saying "Just so" to the bark of a dog; or "Yes, madam," to the black at your elbow.

Care-worn people, however, might refresh themselves oftener with day-sleep than they do; if their bodily state is such as to dispose them to it. It is a mistake to suppose that all care is wakeful. People sometimes sleep, as well as wake, by reason of their sorrow. The difference seems to depend upon the nature of their temperament; though in the *most* excessive cases, sleep is perhaps Nature's never-failing relief, as swooning is upon the rack. A person with jaundice in his blood shall lie down and go to sleep at noon-day, when another of a different complexion shall find his eyes as uncloseable as a statue's, though he has had no sleep for nights together. Without meaning to lessen the dignity of suffering, which has quite enough to do with its

waking hours, it is this that may often account for the profound sleeps enjoyed the night before hazardous battles, executions, and other demands upon an over-excited spirit.

The most complete and healthy sleep that can be taken in the day is in summer-time, out in a field. There is, perhaps, no solitary sensation so exquisite as that of slumbering on the grass or hay, shaded from the hot sun by a tree, with the consciousness of a fresh but light air running through the wide atmosphere, and the sky stretching far overhead upon all sides. Earth, and heaven, and a placid humanity seem to have the creation to themselves. There is nothing between the slumberer and the naked and glad innocence of nature.

Next to this, but at a long interval, the most relishing snatch of slumber out of bed is the one which a tired person takes before he retires for the night, while lingering in his sitting-room. The consciousness of being very sleepy, and of having the power to go to bed immediately, gives great zest to the unwillingness to move. Sometimes he sits nodding in his chair; but the sudden and leaden jerks of the head to which a state of great sleepiness renders him liable, are generally too painful for so luxurious a moment; and he gets into a more legitimate posture, sitting sideways with his head on the chair-back, or throwing his legs up at once on another chair, and half reclining. It is curious, however, to find how long an inconvenient posture will be borne for the sake of this foretaste of repose. The worst of it is, that on going to bed the charm sometimes vanishes; perhaps from the colder temperature of the chamber; for a fireside is a great opiate.

Speaking of the painful positions into which a sleepy lounger will get himself, it is amusing to think of the more fantastic attitudes that so often take place in bed. It we could add anything to the numberless things that have been said about sleep by the poets, it would be upon this point. Sleep never shows himself a greater leveller. A man in his waking moments may look as proud and self-possessed as he pleases. He may walk proudly, he may sit proudly, he may eat his dinner proudly; he may shave himself with an air of infinite superiority; in a word, he may show himself grand and absurd upon the most trifling occasions. But Sleep plays the petrifying magician. He arrests the proudest lord as well as the humblest clown in the most ridiculous postures: so that if you could draw a grandee from his bed without waking him, no limb-twisting fool in a pantomime should create wilder laughter. The toy with the

string between its legs is hardly a posture-master more extravagant. Imagine a despot lifted up to the gaze of his valets, with his eyes shut, his mouth open, his left hand under his right ear, his other twisted and hanging helplessly before him like an idiot's, one knee lifted up, and the other leg stretched out, or both knees huddled up together;—what a scarecrow to lodge majestic power in!

But Sleep is kindly even in his tricks; and the poets have treated him with proper reverence. According to the ancient mythologists he had even one of the Graces to wife. He had a thousand sons, of whom the chief were Morpheus, or the Shaper; Icelos, or the Likely; Phantasus, the Fancy; and Phobetor, the Terror. His dwelling some writers place in a dull and darkling part of the earth; others, with greater compliment, in heaven; and others, with another kind of propriety, by the sea-shore. There is a good description of it in Ovid; but in these abstracted tasks of poetry the moderns outvie the ancients; and there is nobody who has built his bower for him so finely as Spenser. Archimago, in the first book of the *Faërie Queene* (Bk. I, canto i, st. 39 and 41), sends a little spirit down to Morpheus to fetch him a Dream:

> He, making speedy way through spersed ayre,
> And through the world of waters, wide and deepe,
> To Morpheus' house doth hastily repaire.
> Amid the bowels of the earth full steepe
> And low, where dawning day doth never peepe,
> His dwelling is. There, Tethys his wet bed
> Doth ever wash; and Cynthia still doth steepe
> In silver dew his ever-drouping head,
> Whiles sad Night over him her mantle black doth spred.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And more to lull him in his slumber soft
> A trickling streame from high rocke tumbling downe,
> And ever-drizzling rain upon the loft,
> Mixed with a murmuring winde, much like the soune
> Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swoune.
> No other noise, nor people's troublous cryes,
> As still are wont to annoy the wallèd towne,
> Might there be heard; but careless Quiet lyes,
> Wrapt in eternall silence, far from enimyes.

Chaucer has drawn the cave of the same god with greater simplicity; but nothing can have a more deep and sullen effect than his cliffs and cold running waters. It seems as real as an actual solitude, or some quaint old picture in a book of travels in Tartary. He is telling the story of Ceyx and Alcyone in the poem called his *Dream*. Juno tells a messenger to go

to Morpheus and "bid him creep into the body" of the drowned king, to let his wife know the fatal event by his apparition.

> This messenger tooke leave, and went
> Upon his way; and never he stent
> Till he came to the dark valley,
> That stant betweene rockes twey.
> There never yet grew corne, ne gras,
> Ne tree, ne nought that aught was.
> Beast, ne man, ne naught else;
> Save that there were a few wells
> Came running fro the cliffs adowne,
> That made a deadly sleeping soune,
> And runnen downe right by a cave,
> That was under a rocky grave,
> Amid the valley, wonder-deepe.
> There these goddis lay asleepe,
> Morpheus and Eclympasteire,
> That was the god of Sleepis heire,
> That slept and did none other worke.

Where the credentials of this new son and heir, Eclympasteire, are to be found, we know not; but he acts very much, it must be allowed, like an heir-presumptive, in sleeping and doing "none other work."

We dare not trust ourselves with many quotations upon sleep from the poets; they are so numerous as well as beautiful. We must content ourselves with mentioning that our two most favourite passages are one in the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles, admirable for its contrast to a scene of terrible agony, which it closes; and the other the following address in Beaumont and Fletcher's tragedy of *Valentinian*, the hero of which is also a sufferer under bodily torment. He is in a chair, slumbering; and these most exquisite lines are gently sung with music:

> Care-charming Sleep, thou easer of all woes,
> Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
> On this afflicted prince. Fall like a cloud
> In gentle showers: give nothing that is loud
> Or painful to his slumbers: easy, sweet,
> And as a purling stream, thou son of Night,
> Pass by his troubled senses; sing his pain
> Like hollow murmuring wind, or silver rain:
> Into this prince, gently, oh gently slide,
> And kiss him into slumbers, like a bride.

How earnest and prayer-like are these pauses! How lightly sprinkled, and yet how deeply settling, like rain, the fancy! How quiet, affectionate, and perfect the conclusion!

Sleep is most graceful in an infant; soundest, in one who has been tired in the open air; completest, to the seaman after a hard voyage; most welcome, to the mind haunted with one idea; most touching to look at, in the parent that has wept; lightest, in the playful child; proudest, in the bride adored.

BRICKLAYERS, AND AN OLD BOOK

It is a very hot day and a "dusty day"; you are passing through a street in which there is no shade,—a new street, only half-built and half-paved—the areas unfinished as you advance (it is to be hoped no drunken man will stray there)—the floors of the houses only raftered (you can't go in and sit down)—broken glass, at the turnings, on the bits of garden wall—the time, noon—the month, August—the whole place glaring with the sun, and coloured with yellow brick, chalk, and lime. Occasionally you stumble upon the bottom of an old saucepan, or kick a baked shoe.

In this very hot passage through life you are longing for soda-water, or for the sound of a pump, when suddenly you

Hear a trowel tick against a brick,

and down a ladder by your side, which bends at every step, comes dancing, with hod on shoulder, a bricklayer, who looks as dry as his vocation,—his eyes winking, his mouth gaping; his beard grim with a week's growth, the rest of his hair like a badger's. You then, for the first time, see a little water by the wayside, thick and white with chalk; and are doubting whether to admire it as a liquid or detest it for its colour, when a quantity of lime is dashed against the sieve, and you receive in your eyes and mouth a taste of the dry and burning elements of mortar, without the refreshment of the wet. Finally, your shoe is burned; and as the bricklayer says something to his fellow in Irish, who laughs, you fancy that he is witty at your expense, and has made some ingenious bull.

"A pretty picture, Mr. Seer! and very refreshing, this hot weather!"

Oh, but you are only a chance-acquaintance of us, my dear sir; you don't know what philosophies we writers and readers of *The Seer* possess, which renders us "lords of ourselves," unencumbered even with the mighty misery of a hot day, and the hod on another man's shoulder. You, unfortunate, easy man, have been thinking of nothing but the "aggravations" of the street all this while, and are ready to enter your house after the walk, in a temper to kick off your shoes into the servant's face. *We*, besides being in the street, have been in all sorts of pleasant and remote places; have been at Babylon; have been at Bagdad; have bathed in the River Tigris, the river

of that city of the *Arabian Nights*; nay, have been in Paradise itself! led by old Bochart and his undeniable maps, where you see the place as "graphically set forth" as though it had never vanished, and Adam and Eve walking in it, taller than the trees. We are writing upon the very book this moment instead of a desk, a fond custom of ours; though, for dignity's sake, we beg to say we *have* a desk; but we like an old folio to write upon, written by some happy, believing hand, no matter whether we go all lengths or not with *his* sort of proof, provided he be in earnest and a good fellow.

Let us indulge ourselves a moment, during this hot subject, with the map in question. It is now before us, the River Euphrates running up through it in dark fulness, and appearing through the paper on which we are writing like rich veins. Occasionally we take up the paper to see it better; the garden of Eden, however, always remaining visible below, and the mountains of Armenia at top. The map is a small folio size, darkly printed, with thick letters; a good stout sprinkle of mountains; a great tower to mark the site of Babylon; trees, as formal as a park in those days, to shadow forth the terrestrial paradise, with Adam and Eve, as before mentioned; Greek and Hebrew names here and there mingled with the Latin; a lion, towards the north-west, sitting in Armenia, and bigger than a mountain; some other beast, "stepping west" from the Caspian Sea; and a great tablet in the south-west corner, presenting the title of the map, the site of Eden, or the Terrestrial Paradise (Edenis, seu Paradisi Terrestris Situs), surmounted with a tree, and formidable with the Serpent; who, suddenly appearing from one side of it with the apple in his mouth, is startling a traveller on the other. These old maps are as good to study as pictures and books: and the region before us is specially rich —reverend with memories of scripture, pompous with Alexander's cities, and delightful with the *Arabian Nights*. You go up from the Persian Gulf at the foot, passing (like Sindbad) the city of Caiphat, where "bdellium" is to be had, and the island of Bahrim, famous for its pearl fishery (Bahrim Insula Margaritarum Piscat. celebris); then penetrate the garden of Eden, with the River Euphrates, as straight as a canal; pass the Cypress Grove, which furnished the wood of which the ark was made; Mousal, one of our old friends in the *Arabian Nights*; Babylon, famous for a hundred fanes, the sublime of *brick-building*; בהרדצא the "Naarda of Ptolemy," a "celebrated school of the Jews"; Ur (of the Chaldees), the country of

Abraham; Noah's city, Χωμη Θαμανων, the City of Eight, so called from the eight persons that came out of the ark; Omar's Island, where there is a mosque (says the map) made out of the relics of the ark; Mount Ararat, on the top of which it rested; and thence you pass the springs of the Tigris and the Euphrates into Colchis with its Golden Fleece, leaving the Caspian Sea on one side and the Euxine on the other, with Phasis, the country of pheasants, and Cappadocia, where you see the mild light shining on the early Christian church; and you have come all this way through the famous names of Persia, and Arabia, and Armenia, and Mesopotamia, and Syria, and Assyria, with Arbela on the right hand, where Darius was overthrown, and Damascus on the left, rich, from time immemorial to this day, with almost every Eastern association of ideas, sacred and profane.

In regions of this nature did sincere, book-loving, scholarly Bochart spend the *days of his mind*,—by far the greater portion of the actual days of such a man's life; and for that reason we, who, though not so scholarly, love books as well as he did, love to have the folio of such a man under our paper for a desk,—making his venerable mixture of truth and fiction a foundation, as it were, for our own love of both, and rendering the dream of his existence, in some measure, as tangible to us as it was to himself, in the shape of one of his works of love. Do people nowadays,—do even we ourselves,—love books as they did in those times? It is hardly possible, seeing how the volumes have multiplied to distract choice and passion, and also how small in size they have become,—octavos and duodecimos. A little book is indeed "a love" (to use a modern phrase),—and fitted to carry about with us in our walks and pockets: but then a great book,—a folio,—was a thing to look up to,—to build,—a new and lawful Babel,—and therefore it had an aspect more like a religion.—Well; love is religion too, and of the best; and so we will return to our common task.

Now observe, O casual reader of *The Seer*, what such of us as are habituated to it found in our half-built street. You take a brick perhaps for an ordinary bit of burnt clay, fit only to build No. 9 Golf Street, Little Meadows; and to become a brick-bat, and be kicked to pieces in an old alley. O thou of little bookstall! Why, the very manufacture is illustrious with antiquity—with the morning beams that touched the house-tops of Shinaar;—there is a clatter of brick-making in the fields of Accad; and the work looks almost as ancient to this

day, with its straw-built tents and its earthy landscape. Not desolate, therefore, or unrefreshed, were we in our new and hot street; for the first brick, like a talisman, transported us into old Babylon, with its tower and its gardens; and there we drove our chariot on the walls, and conversed with Herodotus, and got out of the way of Semiramis, and read, as men try to read at this day, the arrow-headed letters on the bricks,—as easy to us at that time as A B C; though what they mean now, neither we nor Mr. Rich can tell. The said brick, as our readers have seen, thence took us into paradise, and so through all the regions of Mesopotamia and the *Arabian Nights*, with our friends Bochart and Bedreddin Hassan; and returning home, what do we descry? The street itself alone! No! Ben Jonson, the most illustrious of bricklayers, handling his trowel on the walls of Chancery Lane, and the obstinate remnants of Roman brick and mortar lurking still about London, and Spenser's celebration of

> Those *bricky* towers
> The which on Themmes brode aged backe doe ride,
> Where now the studious lawyers have their bowres;

to wit, the Temple; and then we think of our old and picture-learned friend, our lamented Hazlitt, who first taught us not to think white cottages better than red, especially among trees, noting to us the finer harmony of the contrast—to which we can bear instant and curious testimony; for passing the other day through the gate that leads from St. James's Park into the old court, betwixt Sutherland and Marlborough Houses, we marvelled at what seemed to our near-sighted eyes a shower of red colours in a tree to the right of us, at the corner; which colours, upon inspection, proved to be nothing better than those of the very red bricks that bordered the windows of the building behind the trees. We smiled at the mistake; but it was with pleasure; for it reminded us that even defects of vision may have their compensations; and it looked like a symbol of the pleasures with which fancy and commonplace may conspire to enrich an observer willing to be pleased.

SEAMEN ON SHORE

THE sole business of a seaman on shore, who has to go to sea again, is to take as much pleasure as he can. The moment he sets his foot on dry ground he turns his back on all salt beef and other salt-water restrictions. His long absence, and the impossibility of getting land pleasures at sea, put him upon a sort of desperate appetite. He lands, like a conqueror taking possession. He has been debarred so long, that he is resolved to have that matter out with the inhabitants. They must render an account to him of their treasures, their women, their victualling-stores, their entertainments, their everything; and in return he will behave like a gentleman, and scatter his gold.

His first sensation on landing is the strange firmness of the earth, which he goes treading in a sort of heavy light way, half wagoner and half dancing-master, his shoulders rolling, and his feet touching and going; the same way, in short, in which he keeps himself prepared for all the chances of the vessel, when on deck. There is always this appearance of lightness of foot and heavy strength of upper works in a sailor. And he feels it himself. He lets his jacket fly open, and his shoulders slouch, and his hair grow long, to be gathered into a heavy pigtail; but when full dressed he prides himself on a certain gentility of toe, on a white stocking and a *natty* shoe, issuing lightly out of the flowing blue trouser. His arms are neutral, hanging and swinging in a curve aloof; his hands half open, as if they had just been handling ropes, and had no object in life but to handle them again. He is proud of appearing in a new hat and slops, with a Belcher handkerchief flowing loosely round his neck, and the corner of another out of his pocket. Thus equipped, with pinchbeck buckles on his shoes (which he bought for gold), he puts some tobacco in his mouth, not as if he were going to use it directly but as if he stuffed it in a pouch on one side, as a pelican does fish, to employ it hereafter; and so, with Bet Monson at his side, and perhaps a cane or whanghee twisted under his other arm, sallies forth to take possession of all Lubberland. He buys everything that he comes athwart—nuts, gingerbread, apples, shoe-strings, beer, brandy, gin, buckles, knives, a watch (two, if he has money enough), gowns and handkerchiefs for Bet and his mother and sisters, dozens of "Superfine Best Men's Cotton Stockings," dozens of "Superfine Best Women's Cotton Ditto," best good

Check for Shirts (though he has too much already), infinite needles and thread (to sew his trousers with some day), a footman's laced hat, Bear's Grease, to make his hair grow (by way of joke), several sticks, all sorts of Jew articles, a flute (which he can't play, and never intends), a leg of mutton, which he carries somewhere to roast, and for a piece of which the landlord of the Ship makes him pay twice what he gave for the whole; in short, all that money can be spent upon, which is everything but medicine gratis, and this he would insist on paying for. He would buy all the painted parrots on an Italian's head, on purpose to break them, rather than not spend his money. He has fiddles and a dance at the Ship, with oceans of flip and grog; and gives the blind fiddler tobacco for sweetmeats, and half-a-crown for treading on his toe. He asks the landlady, with a sigh, after her daughter Nanse, who first fired his heart with her silk stockings; and finding that she is married and in trouble, leaves five half-crowns for her, which the old lady appropriates as part payment for a shilling in advance. He goes to the Port playhouse with Bet Monson, and a great red handkerchief full of apples, gingerbread nuts, and fresh beef; calls out for the fiddlers and *Rule Britannia*; pelts Tom Sikes in the pit; and compares Othello to the black ship's cook in his white nightcap. When he comes to London, he and some messmates take a hackney-coach, full of Bet Monsons and tobacco-pipes, and go through the streets smoking and lolling out of window. He has ever been cautious of venturing on horseback, and among his other sights in foreign parts, relates with unfeigned astonishment how he had seen the Turks ride: "Only," says he, guarding against the hearer's incredulity, "they have saddle-boxes to hold 'em in, fore and aft, and shovels like for stirrups." He will tell you how the Chinese drink, and the *Negurs* dance, and the monkeys pelt you with cocoa-nuts; and how King Domy would have built him a mud hut and made him a peer of the realm, if he would have stopped with him, and taught him to make trousers. He has a sister at a "School for Young Ladies," who blushes with a mixture of pleasure and shame at his appearance; and whose confusion he completes by slipping fourpence into her hand, and saying out loud that he has "no more copper" about him. His mother and elder sisters at home dote on all he says and does; telling him, however, that he is a great sea-fellow, and was always wild ever since he was a hop-o'-my-thumb, no higher than the window locker. He tells his mother that she would be a duchess in Paranaboo;

at which the good old portly dame laughs and looks proud. When his sisters complain of his romping, he says that they are only sorry it is not the baker. He frightens them with a mask made after the New Zealand fashion, and is forgiven for his learning. Their mantelpiece is filled by him with shells and shark's teeth; and when he goes to sea again, there is no end of tears, and "God bless you's!" and home-made gingerbread.

His officer on shore does much of all this, only, generally speaking, in a higher taste. The moment he lands he buys quantities of jewellery and other valuables, for all the females of his acquaintance; and is taken in for every article. He sends in a cart-load of fresh meat to the ship, though he is going to town next day; and calling in at a chandler's for some candles, is persuaded to buy a dozen of green wax, with which he lights up the ship at evening; regretting that the fine moonlight hinders the effect of the colour. A man, with a bundle beneath his arm, accosts him in an undertone; and, with a look in which respect for his knowledge is mixed with an avowed zeal for his own interest, asks if his Honour will just step under the gangway here, and inspect some real India shawls. The gallant lieutenant says to himself, "This fellow knows what's what, by his face"; and so he proves it, by being taken in on the spot. When he brings the shawls home he says to his sister, with an air of triumph, "There, Poll, there's something for you; only cost me twelve, and is worth twenty if it's worth a dollar." She turns pale—"Twenty what, my dear George? Why, you haven't given twelve dollars for it, I hope?"—"Not I, by the Lord."—"That's lucky; because you see, my dear George, that all together is not worth more than fourteen or fifteen shillings." "Fourteen or fifteen what! Why it's real India, en't it? Why the fellow told me so; or I'm sure I'd as soon"—(here he tries to hide his blushes with a bluster)—"I'd as soon have given him twelve douses on the chaps as twelve guineas."—"Twelve *guineas*!" exclaims the sister; and then drawling forth, "Why — my — *dear* George," is proceeding to show him what the articles would have cost at Condell's, when he interrupts her by requesting her to go and choose for herself a tea-table service. He then makes his escape to some messmates at a coffee-house, and drowns his recollection of the shawls in the best wine, and a discussion on the comparative merits of the English and West-Indian beauties and tables. At the theatre afterwards, where he has never been before, he takes

a lady at the back of one of the boxes for a woman of quality; and when, after returning his long respectful gaze with a smile, she turns aside and puts her handkerchief to her mouth, he thinks it is in derision, till his friend undeceives him. He is introduced to the lady; and ever afterwards, at first sight of a woman of quality (without any disparagement either to those charming personages), expects her to give him a smile. He thinks the other ladies much better creatures than they are taken for; and for their parts, they tell him that if all men were like himself, they would trust the sex again:—which, for aught we know, is the truth. He has, indeed, what he thinks a very liberal opinion of ladies in general; judging them all, in a manner, with the eye of a seaman's experience. Yet he will believe nevertheless in the "true-love" of any given damsel whom he seeks in the way of marriage, let him roam as much, or remain as long at a distance, as he may. It is not that he wants feeling; but that he has read of it, time out of mind, in songs; and he looks upon constancy as a sort of exploit, answering to those which he performs at sea. He is nice in his watches and linen. He makes you presents of cornelians, antique seals, cocoa-nuts set in silver, and other valuables. When he shakes hands with you, it is like being caught in a windlass. He would not swagger about the streets in his uniform for the world. He is generally modest in company, though liable to be irritated by what he thinks ungentlemanly behaviour. He is also liable to be rendered irritable by sickness; partly because he has been used to command others, and to be served with all possible deference and alacrity; and partly, because the idea of suffering pain, without any honour or profit to get by it, is unprofessional, and he is not accustomed to it. He treats talents unlike his own with great respect. He often perceives his own so little felt, that it teaches him this feeling for that of others. Besides, he admires the quantity of information which people can get, without travelling like himself; especially when he sees how interesting his own becomes, to them as well as to everybody else. When he tells a story, particularly if full of wonders, he takes care to maintain his character for truth and simplicity, by qualifying it with all possible reservations, concessions, and anticipations of objection; such as, "in case, at such times as, so to speak, as it were, at least, at any rate." He seldom uses sea-terms but when jocosely provoked by something contrary to his habits of life; as, for instance, if he is always meeting you on horseback, he asks if you never mean to walk the deck

again; or if he finds you studying day after day, he says you are always overhauling your log-book. He makes more new acquaintances, and forgets his old ones less, than any other man in the busy world; for he is so compelled to make his home everywhere, remembers his native one as such a place of enjoyment, has all his friendly recollections so fixed upon his mind at sea, and has so much to tell and to hear when he returns, that change and separation lose with him the most heartless part of their nature. He also sees such a variety of customs and manners, that he becomes charitable in his opinions altogether; and charity, while it diffuses the affections, cannot let the old ones go. Half the secret of human intercourse is to make allowance for each other.

When the officer is superannuated or retires, he becomes, if intelligent and inquiring, one of the most agreeable old men in the world, equally welcome to the silent for his card-playing, and to the conversational for his recollections. He is fond of astronomy and books of voyages, and is immortal with all who know him for having been round the world, or seen the transit of Venus, or had one of his fingers carried off by a New Zealand hatchet, or a present of feathers from an Otaheitan beauty. If not elevated by his acquirements above some of his humbler tastes, he delights in a corner-cupboard holding his coco-nuts and punch-bowl; has his summer-house castellated and planted with wooden cannon; and sets up the figure of his old ship, the *Britannia* or the *Lovely Nancy*, for a statue in the garden; where it stares eternally with red cheeks and round black eyes, as if in astonishment at its situation.

ANGLING

The anglers are a race of men who puzzle us. We do not mean for their patience, which is laudable, nor for the infinite non-success of some of them, which is desirable. Neither do we agree with the good old joke attributed to Swift, that angling is always to be considered as "a stick and a string, with a fly at one end and a fool at the other." Nay, if he had books with him, and a pleasant day, we can account for the joyousness of that prince of punters, who, having been seen in the same spot one morning and evening, and asked whether he had had any

success, said, No, but in the course of the day he had had "a glorious nibble."

But the anglers boast of the innocence of their pastime; yet it puts fellow-creatures to the torture. They pique themselves on their meditative faculties; and yet their only excuse is a want of thought. It is this that puzzles us. Old Izaak Walton, their patriarch, speaking of his inquisitorial abstractions on the banks of a river, says,

> Here we may
> Think and pray,
> Before death
> Stops our breath.
> Other joys
> Are but toys,
> And to be lamented.

So saying he "stops the breath" of a trout, by plucking him up into an element too thin to respire, with a hook and a tortured worm in his jaws—

> Other joys
> Are but toys.

If you ride, walk, or skate, or play at cricket, or at rackets, or enjoy a ball or a concert, it is "to be lamented." To put pleasure into the faces of half a dozen agreeable women is a toy unworthy of the manliness of a worm-sticker. But to put a hook into the gills of a carp—there you attain the end of a reasonable being; there you show yourself truly a lord of the creation. To plant your feet occasionally in the mud is also a pleasing step. So is cutting your ankles with weeds and stones—

> Other joys
> Are but toys.

The book of Izaak Walton upon angling is a delightful performance in some respects. It smells of the country air, and of the flowers in cottage windows. Its pictures of rural scenery, its simplicity, its snatches of old songs, are all good and refreshing; and his prodigious relish of a dressed fish would not be grudged him, if he had killed it a little more decently. He really seems to have a respect for a piece of salmon; to approach it, like the grace, with his hat off. But what are we to think of a man, who, in the midst of his tortures of other animals, is always valuing himself on his harmlessness; and who actually follows up one of his most complacent passages of this kind with an injunction to impale a certain worm twice upon the hook,

because it is lively, and might get off! All that can be said of such an extraordinary inconsistency, is, that having been bred up in an opinion of the innocence of his amusement, and possessing a healthy power of exercising voluntary thoughts (as far as he had any), he must have dozed over the opposite side of the question, so as to become almost, perhaps quite, insensible to it. And angling does indeed seem the next thing to dreaming. It dispenses with locomotion, reconciles contradictions, and renders the very countenance null and void. A friend of ours, who is an admirer of Walton, was struck, just as we were, with the likeness of the old angler's face to a fish. It is hard, angular, and of no expression. It seems to have been "subdued to what it worked in"; to have become native to the watery element. One might have said to Walton, "O flesh, how art thou fishified!" He looks like a pike, dressed in broad-cloth instead of butter.

The face of his pupil and follower, or, as he fondly called himself, son, Charles Cotton, a poet and a man of wit, is more good-natured and uneasy. Cotton's pleasures had not been confined to fishing. His sympathies, indeed, had been a little superabundant, and left him, perhaps, not so great a power of thinking as he pleased. Accordingly, we find in his writings more symptoms of scrupulousness upon the subject than in those of his father.

Walton says that an angler does no hurt but to fish; and this he counts as nothing. Cotton argues that the slaughter of them is not to be "repented"; and he says to his father (which looks as if the old gentleman sometimes thought upon the subject too)—

> There whilst behind some bush we wait
> The scaly people to betray,
> We'll *prove it just*, with treacherous bait,
> To make the preying trout our prey.

This argument, and another about fish's being made for "man's pleasure and diet," are all that anglers have to say for the innocence of their sport. But they are both as rank sophistications as can be; sheer beggings of the question. To kill fish outright is a different matter. Death is common to all; and a trout, speedily killed by a man, may suffer no worse fate than from the jaws of a pike. It is the mode, the lingering cat-like cruelty of the angler's sport, that renders it unworthy. If fish were made to be so treated, then men were also made to be racked and throttled by inquisitors. Indeed, among other

advantages of angling, Cotton reckons up a tame, fish-like acquiescence to whatever the powerful choose to inflict.

> We scratch not our pates,
> Nor repine at the rates
> Our superiors impose on our living;
> But do frankly submit,
> Knowing they have more wit
> In demanding, than we have in giving.
>
> Whilst quiet we sit,
> We conclude all things fit,
> Acquiescing with hearty submission, etc.

And this was no pastoral fiction. The anglers of those times, whose skill became famous from the celebrity of their names, chiefly in divinity, were great fallers-in with passive obedience. They seemed to think (whatever they found it necessary to say now and then upon that point) that the great had as much right to prey upon men, as the small had upon fishes; only the men, luckily, had not hooks put into their jaws, and the sides of their cheeks torn to pieces. The two most famous anglers in history are Antony and Cleopatra. These extremes of the angling character are very edifying.

We should like to know what these grave divines would have said to the heavenly maxim of "Do as you would be done by." Let us imagine ourselves, for instance, a sort of human fish. Air is but a rarer fluid; and at present, in this November weather, a supernatural being who should look down upon us from a higher atmosphere would have some reason to regard us as a kind of pedestrian carp. Now, fancy a Genius fishing for us. Fancy him baiting a great hook with pickled salmon, and twitching up old Izaak Walton from the banks of the River Lea, with the hook through his ear. How he would go up, roaring and screaming, and thinking the devil had got him!

> Other joys
> Are but toys.

We repeat that if fish were made to be so treated, then we were just as much made to be racked and suffocated; and a foot-pad might have argued that old Izaak was made to have his pocket picked, and be tumbled into the river. There is no end of these idle and selfish beggings of the question, which at last argue quite as much against us as for us. And granting them, for the sake of argument, it is still obvious, on the very same ground, that men were also made to be taught better. We do not say that all anglers are of a cruel nature; many of

them, doubtless, are amiable men in other matters. They have only never thought, perhaps, on that side of the question, or been accustomed from childhood to blink it. But once thinking, their amiableness and their practice become incompatible; and if they should wish, on that account, never to have thought upon the subject, they would only show that they cared for their own exemption from suffering, and not for its diminution in general.

OF DREAMS

The materialists and psychologists are at issue upon the subject of dreams. The latter hold them to be one among the many proofs of the existence of a soul: the former endeavour to account for them upon principles altogether corporeal. We must own that the effects of their respective arguments, as is usual with us on these occasions, is not so much to satisfy us with either, as to dissatisfy us with both. The psychologist, with all his struggles, never appears to be able to get rid of his body; and the materialist leaves something extremely deficient in the vivacity of his proofs, by his ignorance of that *primum mobile*, which is the soul of everything. In the meantime, while they go on with their laudable inquiries (for which we have a very sincere respect), it is our business to go on recommending a taste for results as well as causes, and turning everything to account in this beautiful star of ours, the earth. There is no reason why the acutest investigator of mysteries should not enjoy his existence, and have his earthly dreams made as pleasant as possible; and for our parts, we see nothing at present, either in body or soul, but a medium for a world of perceptions, the very unpleasantest of whose dreams are but warnings to us how we depart from the health and natural piety of the pleasant ones.

What seems incontrovertible in the case of dreams is, that they are most apt to take place when the body is most affected. They seem to turn most upon us when the suspension of the will has been reduced to its most helpless state by indulgence. The door of the fancy is left without its keeper, and forth issue, pell-mell, the whole rout of ideas or images, which had been stored within the brain, and kept to their respective duties.

They are like a school let loose, or the winds in Virgil, or Lord Anson's drunken sailors at Panama, who dressed themselves up in all sorts of ridiculous apparel.

We were about to say, that being writers, we are of necessity dreamers; for thinking disposes the bodily faculties to be more than usually affected by the causes that generally produce dreaming. But extremes appear to meet on this, as on other occasions, at least as far as the meditative power is concerned; for there is an excellent reasoner now living, who, telling another that he was not fond of the wilder parts of the *Arabian Nights*, was answered with great felicity, "Then you never dream." It turned out that he really dreamt little. Here the link is impaired that connects a tendency to indigestion with thinking on the one hand and dreaming on the other. If we are to believe Herodotus, the Atlantes, an African people, never dreamt; which Montaigne is willing to attribute to their never having eaten anything that died of itself. It is to be presumed that he looked upon their temperance as a matter of course. The same philosopher, who was a deep thinker and of a delicate constitution, informs us that he himself dreamt but sparingly; but then when he did, his dreams were fantastic though cheerful. This is the very triumph of the animal spirits, to unite the strangeness of sick dreams with the cheerfulness of healthy ones. To these exceptions against the usual theories we may add, that dreams are by no means modified of necessity by what the mind has been occupied with in the course of the day, or even of months; for during our two years' confinement in prison, we did not dream more than twice of our chief subjects of reflection, the prison itself not excepted. The two dreams were both connected with the latter, and both the same. We fancied that we had slipped out of jail, and gone to the theatre, where we were horrified by seeing the faces of the whole audience unexpectedly turned upon us.

It is certain enough, however, that dreams in general proceed from indigestion; and it appears nearly as much so, that they are more or less strange according to the waking fancy of the dreamer. It is probable that a trivial degree of indigestion will give rise to very fantastic dreams in a fanciful mind; while, on the other hand, a good orthodox repletion is necessary towards a fanciful creation in a dull one. It shall make an epicure, of any vivacity, act as many parts in his sleep as a tragedian, "for that night only." The inspirations of veal, in particular, are accounted extremely Delphic; Italian pickles

partake of the same spirit of Dante; and a butter-boat shall contain as many ghosts as Charon's.

There is a passage in Lucian which would have made a good subject for those who painted the temptations of the saints. It is a description of the City of Dreams, very lively and crowded. We quote after Natalis Comes, not having the *True History* by us. The city, we are told, stands in an immense plain, surrounded by a thick forest of tall poppy-trees, and enormous mandragoras. The plain is also full of all sorts of somniculous plants, and the trees are haunted with multitudes of owls and bats, but no other bird. The city is washed by the River Lethe, called by others the Nightbringer, whose course is inaudible, and like the flowing of oil. (Spenser's follower, Browne, has been here—

> Where consort none other fowl,
> Save the bat and sullen owl;
> Where flows Lethe without coil,
> Softly, like a stream of oil.
>
> *Inner Temple Mask.*)

There are two gates to the city: one of horn, in which almost everything that can happen in sleep is represented, as in a transparency; the other of ivory, in which the dreams are but dimly shadowed. The principal temple is that of Night; and there are others, dedicated to Truth and Falsehood, who have oracles. The population consists of Dreams, who are of an infinite variety of shape. Some are small and slender; others distorted, humped, and monstrous; others proper and tall, with blooming, good-tempered faces. Others, again have terrible countenances, are winged, and seem eternally threatening the city with some calamity; while others walk about in the pomp and garniture of kings. If any mortal comes into the place, there is a multitude of Domestic Dreams, who meet him with offers of service; and they are followed by some of the others that bring him good or bad news, generally false; for the inhabitants of that city are, for the most part, a lying and crafty generation, speaking one thing and thinking another. This is having a new advantage over us. Only think of the mental reservation of a Dream!

If Lucian had divided his city into ranks and denominations, he might possibly have classed them under the heads of Dreams Lofty, Dreams Ludicrous, Dreams Pathetic, Dreams Horrible, Dreams Bodily Painful or Pleasant, Dreams of Common Life, Dreams of New Aspects of Humanity; Dreams Mixed, Fantastic, and utterly Confused. He speaks of winged ones, which is

judicious, for they are very common; but unless Natalis Comes, who is not a very bright person, misrepresents him, he makes them of the melancholy class, which, in general, they are not.

In airy sanguine dreams aloft we bound.

Nothing is more common, or usually more pleasant, than to dream of flying. It is one of the best specimens of the race; for besides being agreeable, it is made up of the dreams of ordinary life and those of surprising combination. Thus the dreamer sometimes thinks he is flying in unknown regions, sometimes skimming only a few inches above the ground, and wondering he never did it before. He will even dream that he is dreaming about it; and yet is so fully convinced of its feasability, and so astonished at his never having hit upon so delightful a truism, that he is resolved to practise it the moment he wakes. "One has only," says he, "to give a little spring with one's foot, so, and—oh! it's the easiest and most obvious thing in the world. I'll always skim hereafter." We dreamt once that a woman set up some Flying Rooms, as a person does a tavern. We went to try them, and nothing could be more satisfactory and commonplace on all sides. The landlady welcomed us with a courtesy, hoped for friends and favours, etc., and then showed us into a spacious room, not round, as might be expected, but long, and after the usual dining fashion. "Perhaps, sir," said she, "you would like to try the room." Upon which we made no more ado, but sprung up and made two or three genteel circuits, now taking the height of it, like a house-lark, and then cutting the angles, like a swallow. "Very pretty flying, indeed," said we, "and very moderate."

A house for the purpose of taking flights in, when the open air was to be had for nothing, is fantastic enough; but what shall we say to those confoundings of all time, place, and substance, which are constantly happening to persons of any creativeness of stomach? Thus, you shall meet a friend in a gateway, who, besides being your friend, shall be your enemy; and besides being Jones or Tomkins, shall be a bull; and besides asking you in, shall oppose your entrance. Nevertheless you are not at all surprised; or if surprised, you are only so at something not surprising. To be Tomkins and a bull at once is the most ordinary of commonplaces; but that, being a bull, he should have horns, is what astonishes you; and you are amazed at his not being in Holborn or the Strand, where he never lived.

To be in two places at once is not uncommon to a dreamer.

He will also be young and old at the same time, a school-boy and a man; will live many years in a few minutes, like the Sultan who dipped his head in the tub of water; will be full of zeal and dialogue upon some matter of indifference; go to the opera with a dish under his arm, to be in the fashion; talk faster in verse than prose; and ask a set of horses to a musical party, telling them that he knows they will be pleased, because blue is the general wear, and Mozart has gone down to Gloucestershire to fit up a house for Epaminondas.

It is a curious proof of the concern which body has in these vagaries, that when you dream of any particular limb being in pain, you shall most likely have gone to sleep in a posture that affects it. A weight on the feet will produce dreams in which your are rooted to the ground, or caught by a goblin out of the earth. A cramped hand or leg shall get you tortured in the Inquisition; and a head too much thrown back give you the sense of an interminable visitation of stifling. The nightmare, the heaviest punisher of repletion, will visit some persons merely for lying on their backs; which shows how much it is concerned in a particular condition of the frame. Sometimes it lies upon the chest like a vital lump. Sometimes it comes in the guise of a horrid dwarf, or malignant little hag, who grins in your teeth, and will not let you rise. Its most common enormity is to pin you to the ground with excess of fear, while something dreadful is coming up, a goblin or a mad bull. Sometimes the horror is of a very elaborate description, such as being spell-bound in an old house, which has a mysterious and shocking possessor. He is a gigantic deformity, and will pass presently through the room in which you are sitting. He comes, not a giant, but a dwarf, of the most strange and odious description, hairy, spider-like, and chuckling. His mere passage is unbearable. The agony arises at every step. You would protest against so malignant a sublimation of the shocking, but are unable to move or speak. At length you give loud and long-drawn groans, and start up with a preternatural effort, awake.

If horrible and fantastic dreams are the most perplexing, there are pathetic ones more saddening. A friend dreaming of the loss of his friend, or a lover of that of his mistress, or a kinsman of that of a dear relation, is steeped in the bitterness of death. To wake and find it not true,—what a delicious sensation is that! On the other hand, to dream of a friend or a beloved relative restored to us,—to live over again the hours

of childhood at the knee of a beloved mother, to be on the eve of marrying an affectionate mistress, with a thousand other joys snatched back out of the grave, and too painful to dwell upon,—what a dreary rush of sensation comes like a shadow upon us when we wake! How true, and divested of all that is justly called conceit in poetry, is that termination of Milton's sonnet on dreaming of his deceased wife,—

> But oh, as to embrace me she inclined,
> I waked; she fled; and day brought back my night.

It is strange that so good and cordial a critic as Warton should think this a mere conceit on his blindness. An allusion to his blindness may or may not be involved in it; but the sense of returning shadow on the mind is true to nature, and must have been experienced by everyone who has lost a person dear to him. There is a beautiful sonnet by Camoens on a similar occasion; a small canzone by Sanazzaro, which ends with saying, that although he waked and missed his lady's hand in his, he still tried to cheat himself by keeping his eyes shut; and three divine dreams of Laura by Petrarch, Sonnet XXXIV, vol. ii, Sonnet LXXIX, ib., and the canzone beginning

> Quando il soave mio fido conforto.

But we must be cautious how we think of the poets on this most poetical subject, or we shall write three articles instead of one. As it is, we have not left ourselves room for some agreeable dreams, which we meant to have taken between these our gallant and imaginative sheets. They must be interrupted, as they are apt to be, like the young lady's in the *Adventures of a Lapdog*, who, blushing divinely, had just uttered the words, "My Lord, I am wholly yours," when she was awaked by the jumping up of that officious little puppy.

A TALE FOR A CHIMNEY-CORNER

A MAN who does not contribute his quota of grim story nowadays, seems hardly to be free of the republic of letters. He is bound to wear a death's-head, as part of his insignia. If he does not frighten everybody, he is nobody. If he does not shock the ladies, what can be expected of him?

We confess we think very cheaply of these stories in general.

A story, merely horrible or even awful, which contains no sentiment elevating to the human heart and its hopes, is a mere appeal to the least judicious, least healthy, and least masculine of our passions—fear. They whose attention can be gravely arrested by it are in a fit state to receive any absurdity with respect; and this is the reason why less talents are required to enforce it than in any other species of composition. With this opinion of such things, we may be allowed to say that we would undertake to write a dozen horrible stories in a day, all of which should make the common worshippers of power, who were not in the very healthiest condition, turn pale. We would tell of Haunting Old Women, and Knocking Ghosts, and Solitary Lean Hands, and Empusas on One Leg, and Ladies growing Longer and Longer, and Horrid Eyes meeting us through Key-holes, and Plaintive Heads, and Shrieking Statues, and Shocking Anomalies of Shape, and Things which when seen drove people mad; and Indigestion knows what besides. But who would measure talents with a leg of veal, or a German sausage?

Mere grimness is as easy as grinning; but it requires something to put a handsome face on a story. Narratives become of suspicious merit in proportion as they lean to Newgate-like offences, particularly of blood and wounds. A child has a reasonable respect for a Raw-head-and-bloody-bones, because all images whatsoever of pain and terror are new and fearful to his inexperienced age; but sufferings merely physical (unless sublimated like those of Philoctetes) are commonplaces to a grown man. Images, to become awful to him, must be removed from the grossness of the shambles. A death's-head was a respectable thing in the hands of a poring monk, or of a nun compelled to avoid the idea of life and society, or of a hermit already buried in the desert. Holbein's *Dance of Death*, in which every grinning skeleton leads along a man of rank, from the pope to the gentleman, is a good Memento Mori; but there the skeletons have an air of the ludicrous and satirical. If we were threatened with them in a grave way, as spectres, we should have a right to ask how they could walk about without muscles. Thus many of the tales written by such authors as the late Mr. Lewis, who wanted sentiment to give him the heart of truth, are quite puerile. When his spectral nuns go about bleeding, we think they ought in decency to have applied to some ghost of a surgeon. His Little Grey Men, who sit munching hearts, are of a piece with fellows that eat cats for a wager.

Stories that give mental pain to no purpose, or to very little

purpose compared with the unpleasant ideas they excite of human nature, are as gross mistakes, in their way, as these, and twenty times as pernicious: for the latter become ludicrous to grown people. They originate also in the same extremes, of callousness, or of morbid want of excitement, as the others. But more of these hereafter. Our business at present is with things ghastly and ghostly.

A ghost story, to be a good one, should unite, as much as possible, objects such as they are in life, with a preternatural spirit. And to be a perfect one—at least to add to the other utility of excitement a moral utility—they should imply some great sentiment—something that comes out of the next world to remind us of our duties in this; or something that helps to carry on the idea of our humanity into after-life, even when we least think we shall take it with us. When "the buried majesty of Denmark," revisits earth to speak to his son Hamlet, he comes armed, as he used to be, in his complete steel. His visor is raised; and the same fine face is there; only, in spite of his punishing errand and his own sufferings, with

> A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

When Donne the poet, in his thoughtful eagerness to reconcile life and death, had a figure of himself painted in a shroud, and laid by his bedside in a coffin, he did a higher thing than the monks and hermits with their skulls. It was taking his humanity with him into the other world, not affecting to lower the sense of it by regarding it piecemeal or in the framework. Burns, in his *Tam o' Shanter*, shows the dead in their coffins after the same fashion. He does not lay bare to us their skeletons or refuse, things with which we can connect no sympathy or spiritual wonder. They still are flesh and body to retain the one; yet so look and behave, inconsistent in their very consistency, as to excite the other.

> Coffins stood round like open presses,
> Which showed the dead in their last dresses:
> And by some devilish cantrip sleight,
> Each, in his cauld hand, held a light.

Re-animation is perhaps the most ghastly of all ghastly things, uniting as it does an appearance of natural interdiction from the next world with a supernatural experience of it. Our human consciousness is jarred out of its self-possession. The extremes of habit and newness, of commonplace and astonishment, meet suddenly, without the kindly introduction of death and change;

and the stranger appals us in proportion. When the account appeared the other day in the newspapers of the galvanised dead body, whose features as well as limbs underwent such contortions, that it seemed as if it were about to rise up, one almost expected to hear, for the first time, news of the other world. Perhaps the most appalling figure in Spenser is that of Maleger (*Faërie Queene*, Bk. II, canto xi, st. 20):

> Upon a tygre swift and fierce he rode,
> That as the winde ran underneath his lode,
> Whiles his long legs nigh raught unto the ground:
> Full large he was of limbe, and shoulders brode,
> But of such subtile substance and unsound,
> That like a ghost he seemed, whose grave-clothes were unbound.

Mr. Coleridge, in that voyage of his to the brink of all unutterable things, the *Ancient Mariner* (which works out, however, a fine sentiment), does not set mere ghosts or hobgoblins to man the ship again, when its crew are dead; but re-animates, for a while, the crew themselves. There is a striking fiction of this sort in Sale's notes upon the Koran. Solomon dies during the building of the temple, but his body remains leaning on a staff and overlooking the workmen, as if it were alive; till a worm gnawing through the prop, he falls down.—The contrast of the appearance of humanity with something mortal or supernatural is always the more terrible in proportion as it is complete. In the pictures of the temptations of saints and hermits, where the holy person is surrounded, teased, and enticed with devils and fantastic shapes, the most shocking phantasm is that of the beautiful woman. To return also to the poem above mentioned. The most appalling personage in Mr. Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* is the Spectre-Woman, who is called Life-in-Death. He renders the most hideous abstraction more terrible than it could otherwise have been, by embodying it in its own reverse. "Death," not only "lives" in it; but the "unutterable" becomes uttered. To see such an unearthly passage end in such earthliness, seems to turn commonplace itself into a sort of spectral doubt.

But we must come to Mr. Coleridge's story with our subtlest imaginations upon us. Now let us put our knees a little nearer the fire, and tell a homelier one about Life in Death. The groundwork of it is in Sandys' Commentary upon Ovid, and quoted from Sabinus.

A gentleman of Bavaria, of a noble family, was so afflicted at the death of his wife, that unable to bear the company of

any other person, he gave himself up to a solitary way of living. This was the more remarkable in him, as he had been a man of jovial habits, fond of his wine and visitors, and impatient of having his numerous indulgences contradicted. But in the same temper perhaps might be found the cause of his sorrow; for though he would be impatient with his wife, as with others, yet his love for her was one of the gentlest wills he had; and the sweet and unaffected face which she always turned upon his anger might have been a thing more easy for him to trespass upon while living than to forget when dead and gone. His very anger towards her, compared with that towards others, was a relief to him. It was rather a wish to refresh himself in the balmy feeling of her patience, than to make her unhappy herself, or to punish her, as some would have done, for that virtuous contrast to his own vice.

But whether he bethought himself, after her death, that this was a very selfish mode of loving; or whether, as some thought, he had wearied out her life with habits so contrary to her own; or whether, as others reported, he had put it to a fatal risk by some lordly piece of self-will, in consequence of which she had caught a fever on the cold river during a night of festivity; he surprised even those who thought that he loved her by the extreme bitterness of his grief. The very mention of festivity, though he was patient for the first day or two, afterwards threw him into a passion of rage; but by degrees even his rage followed his other older habits. He was gentle, but ever silent. He ate and drank but sufficient to keep him alive; and used to spend the greater part of the day in the spot where his wife was buried.

He was going there one evening, in a very melancholy manner, with his eyes turned towards the earth, and had just entered the rails of the burial-ground, when he was accosted by the mild voice of somebody coming to meet him. "It is a blessed evening, sir," said the voice. The gentleman looked up. Nobody but himself was allowed to be in the place at that hour; and yet he saw, with astonishment, a young chorister approaching him. He was going to express some wonder, when, he said, the modest though assured look of the boy, and the extreme beauty of his countenance, which glowed in the setting sun before him, made an irresistible addition to the singular sweetness of his voice; and he asked him, with an involuntary calmness, and a gesture of respect, not what he did there, but what he wished. "Only to wish you all good things," answered the stranger, who had now come up, "and

to give you this letter." The gentleman took the letter, and saw upon it, with a beating yet scarcely bewildered heart, the handwriting of his wife. He raised his eyes again to speak to the boy, but he was gone. He cast them far and near round the place, but there were no traces of a passenger. He then opened the letter, and by the divine light of the setting sun read these words:

To my dear husband, who sorrows for his wife:
Otto, my husband, the soul you regret so is returned. You will know the truth of this, and be prepared with calmness to see it, by the divineness of the messenger, who has passed you. You will find me sitting in the public walk, praying for you; praying that you may never more give way to those gusts of passion, and those curses against others, which divided us.
This, with a warm hand, from the living Bertha.

Otto (for such, it seems, was the gentleman's name) went instantly, calmly, quickly, yet with a sort of benumbed being, to the public walk. He felt, but with only a half-consciousness, as if he glided without a body. But all his spirit was awake, eager, intensely conscious. It seemed to him as if there had been but two things in the world—Life and Death; and that Death was dead. All else appeared to have been a dream. He had awaked from a waking state, and found himself all eye, and spirit, and locomotion. He said to himself, once, as he went: "This is not a dream. I will ask my great ancestors to-morrow to my new bridal feast, for they are alive." Otto had been calm at first, but something of old and triumphant feelings seemed again to come over him. Was he again too proud and confident? Did his earthly humours prevail again, when he thought them least upon him? We shall see.

The Bavarian arrived at the public walk. It was full of people with their wives and children, enjoying the beauty of the evening. Something like common fear came over him, as he went in and out among them, looking at the benches on each side. It happened that there was only one person, a lady, sitting upon them. She had her veil down; and his being underwent a fierce but short convulsion as he went near her. Something had a little baffled the calmer inspiration of the angel that had accosted him: for fear prevailed at the instant, and Otto passed on. He returned before he had reached the end of the walk, and approached the lady again. She was still sitting in the same quiet posture, only he thought she looked at him. Again he passed her. On his second return, a grave

and sweet courage come upon him, and in an under but firm tone of inquiry he said, "Bertha?"—"I thought you had forgotten me," said that well-known and mellow voice, which he had seemed as far from ever hearing again as earth is from heaven. He took her hand, which grasped his in turn; and they walked home in silence together, the arm, which was wound within his, giving warmth for warmth.

The neighbours seemed to have a miraculous want of wonder at the lady's reappearance. Something was said about a mock-funeral, and her having withdrawn from his company for a while; but visitors came as before, and his wife returned to her household affairs. It was only remarked that she always looked pale and pensive. But she was more kind to all, even than before; and her pensiveness seemed rather the result of some great internal thought than of unhappiness.

For a year or two the Bavarian retained the better temper which he acquired. His fortunes flourished beyond his earliest ambition; the most amiable as well as noble persons of the district were frequent visitors; and people said, that to be at Otto's house must be the next thing to being in heaven. But be degrees his self-will returned with his prosperity. He never vented impatience on his wife; but he again began to show that the disquietude it gave her to see it vented on others was a secondary thing in his mind to the indulgence of it. Whether it was that his grief for her loss had been rather remorse than affection, so he held himself secure if he treated her well; or whether he was at all times rather proud of her than fond; or whatever was the cause which again set his antipathies above his sympathies, certain it was that his old habits returned upon him; not so often indeed, but with greater violence and pride when they did. These were the only times at which his wife was observed to show any ordinary symptoms of uneasiness.

At length, one day, some strong rebuff which he had received from an alienated neighbour threw him into such a transport of rage that he gave way to the most bitter imprecations, crying with a loud voice—"This treatment to *me* too! To *me*! To me, who if the world knew all"—— At these words his wife, who had in vain laid her hand upon his, and looked him with dreary earnestness in the face, suddenly glided from the room. He and two or three who were present were struck with a dumb horror. They said she did not walk out, nor vanish suddenly; but glided, as one who could dispense with the use of feet. After a moment's pause the others proposed to him to follow

her. He made a movement of despair; but they went. There was a short passage, which turned to the right into her favourite room. They knocked at the door twice or three times, and received no answer. At last one of them gently opened it; and looking in they saw her, as they thought, standing before a fire, which was the only light in the room. Yet she stood so far from it, as rather to be in the middle of the room; only the face was towards the fire, and she seemed looking upon it. They addressed her, but received no answer. They stepped gently towards her, and still received none. The figure stood dumb and unmoved. At last one of them went round in front and instantly fell on the floor. The figure was without body. A hollow hood was left instead of a face. The clothes were standing upright by themselves.

That room was blocked up for ever, for the clothes, if it might be so, to moulder away. It was called the Room of the Lady's Figure. The house, after the gentleman's death, was long uninhabited, and at length burnt by the peasants in an insurrection. As for himself, he died about nine months after, a gentle and childlike penitent. He had never stirred from the house since; and nobody would venture to go near him but a man who had the reputation of being a reprobate. It was from this man that the particulars of the story came first. He would distribute the gentleman's alms in great abundance to any strange poor who would accept them; for most of the neighbours held them in horror. He tried all he could to get the parents among them to let some of their little children, or a single one of them, go to see his employer. They said he even asked it one day with tears in his eyes. But they shuddered to think of it; and the matter was not mended when this profane person, in a fit of impatience, said one day that he would have a child of his own on purpose. His employer, however, died in a day or two. They did not believe a word he told them of all the Bavarian's gentleness, looking upon the latter as a sort of Ogre, and upon his agent as little better, though a good-natured-looking, earnest kind of person. It was said, many years after, that this man had been a friend of the Bavarian's when young, and had been deserted by him. And the young believed it, whatever the old might do.

THE CAT BY THE FIRE

A BLAZING fire, a warm rug, candles lit and curtains drawn, the kettle on for tea (nor do the "first circles" despise the preference of a kettle to an urn, as the third or fourth may do), and finally, the cat before you, attracting your attention,—it is a scene which everybody likes unless he has a morbid aversion to cats; which is not common. There are some nice inquirers, it is true, who are apt to make uneasy comparisons of cats with dogs,—to say they are not so loving, that they prefer the house to the man, etc. But agreeably to the good old maxim, that "comparisons are odious," our readers, we hope, will continue to like what is likable in anything, for its own sake, without trying to render it unlikable from its inferiority to something else,—a process by which we might ingeniously contrive to put soot into every dish that is set before us, and to reject one thing after another, till we were pleased with nothing. Here is a good fireside, and a cat to it; and it would be our own fault, if, in removing to another house and another fireside, we did not take care that the cat removed with us. Cats cannot look to the moving of goods, as men do. If we would have creatures considerate towards us, we must be so towards them. It is not to be expected of everybody, quadruped or biped, that they should stick to us in spite of our want of merit, like a dog or a benevolent sage. Besides, stories have been told of cats very much to the credit of their benignity; such as their following a master about like a dog, waiting at a gentleman's door to thank him for some obligation overnight, etc. And our readers may remember the history of the famous Godolphin Arabian, upon whose grave a cat that had lived with him in the stable went and stretched itself, and died.

The cat purrs, as if it applauded our consideration,—and gently moves its tail. What an odd expression of the power to be irritable and the will to be pleased there is in its face, as it looks up at us! We must own, that we do not prefer a cat in the act of purring, or of looking in that manner. It reminds us of the sort of smile, or *simmer* (*simper* is too weak and fleeting a word) that is apt to be in the faces of irritable people when they are pleased to be in a state of satisfaction. We prefer, for a general expression, the cat in a quiet, unpretending state, and the human countenance with a look indicative of habitual grace and composure, as if it were not necessary to take any

violent steps to prove its amiability,—the "smile without a smile," as the poet beautifully calls it.

Furthermore (in order to get rid at once of all that may be objected to poor Pussy, as boys at school get down their bad dumpling as fast as possible before the meat comes), we own we have an objection to the way in which a cat sports with a mouse before she kills it, tossing and jerking it about like a ball, and letting it go, in order to pounce upon it with the greater relish. And yet what right have we to apply human measures of cruelty to the inferior reflectability of a cat? Perhaps she has no idea of the mouse's being alive, in the sense that we have,—most likely she looks upon it as a pleasant movable toy, made to be eaten,—a sort of lively pudding, that oddly jumps hither and thither. It would be hard to beat into the head of a country squire of the old class that there is any cruelty in hunting a hare; and most assuredly it would be still harder to beat mouse-sparing into the head of a cat. You might read the most pungent essay on the subject into her ear, and she would only sneeze at it.

As to the unnatural cruelties, which we sometimes read of, committed by cats upon their offspring, they are exceptions to the common and beautiful rules of nature, and accordingly we have nothing to do with them. They are traceable to some unnatural circumstances of breeding or position. Enormities as monstrous are to be found among human beings, and argue nothing against the general character of the species. Even dogs are not always immaculate; and sages have made slips. Dr. Franklin cut off his son with a shilling for differing with him in politics.

But cats resemble tigers? They are tigers in miniature? Well,—and very pretty miniatures they are. And what has the tiger himself done, that he has not a right to eat his dinner as well as Jones? A tiger treats a man much as a cat does a mouse;—granted; but we have no reason to suppose that he is aware of the man's sufferings, or means anything but to satisfy his hunger; and what have the butcher and poulterer been about meanwhile? The tiger, it is true, lays about him a little superfluously sometimes, when he gets into a sheepfold, and kills more than he eats; but does not the Squire or the Marquis do pretty much like him in the month of September? Nay, do we not hear of venerable judges, that would not hurt a fly, going about in that refreshing month, seeking whom they may lame? See the effect of habit and education! And you can

educate the tiger in no other way than by attending to his stomach. Fill that, and he will want no men to eat, probably not even to lame. On the other hand, deprive Jones of his dinner for a day or two, and see what a state he will be in, especially if he is by nature irascible. Nay, keep him from it for an half an hour, and observe the tiger propensities of his stomach and fingers,—how worthy of killing he thinks the cook, and what boxes of the ear he feels inclined to give the footboy.

Animals, by the nature of things, in their present state, dispose of one another into their respective stomachs, without ill-will on any side. They keep down the several populations of their neighbours, till time may come when superfluous population of any kind need not exist, and predatory appearances may vanish from the earth, as the wolves have done from England. But whether they may or not is not a question by a hundred times so important to moral inquirers as into the possibilities of human education and the nonsense of ill-will. Show the nonentity of that, and we may all get our dinners as jovially as we can, sure of these three undoubted facts,—that life is long, death short, and the world beautiful. And so we bring our thoughts back again to the fireside, and look at the cat.

Poor Pussy! she looks up at us again, as if she thanked us for those vindications of dinner; and symbolically gives a twist of a yawn and a lick to her whiskers. Now she proceeds to clean herself all over, having a just sense of the demands of her elegant person,—beginning judiciously with her paws, and fetching amazing tongues at her hind-hips. Anon, she scratches her neck with a foot of rapid delight, leaning her head towards it, and shutting her eyes, half to accommodate the action of the skin, and half to enjoy the luxury. She then rewards her paws with a few more touches;—look at the action of her head and neck, how pleasing it is, the ears pointed forward, and the neck gently arching to and fro. Finally, she gives a sneeze, and another twist of mouth and whiskers, and then, curling her tail towards her front claws, settles herself on her hind quarters, in an attitude of bland meditation.

What does she think of?—of her saucer of milk at breakfast? or of the thump she got yesterday in the kitchen for stealing the meat? or of her own meat, the Tartar's dish, noble horse-flesh? or of her friend the cat next door, the most impassioned of serenaders? or of her little ones, some of whom are now large;

and all of them gone? Is *that* among her recollections when she looks pensive? Does she taste of the noble prerogative-sorrows of man?

She is a sprightly cat, hardly past her youth; so, happening to move the fringe of the rug a little with our foot, she darts out a paw, and begins plucking it and inquiring into the matter, as if it were a challenge to play, or something lively enough to be eaten. What a graceful action of that foot of hers, between delicacy and petulance!—combining something of a thrust out, a beat, and a scratch. There seems even something of a little bit of fear in it, as if just enough to provoke her courage, and give her the excitement of a sense of hazard. We remember being much amused with seeing a kitten manifestly making a series of experiments upon the patience of its mother,—trying how far the latter would put up with positive bites and thumps. The kitten ran at her every moment, gave her a knock or a bite of the tail; and then ran back again, to recommence the assault. The mother sate looking at her, as if betwixt tolerance and admiration, to see how far the spirit of the family was inherited or improved by her sprightly offspring. At length, however, the "little Pickle" presumed too far, and the mother, lifting up her paw, and meeting her at the very nick of the moment, gave her one of the most unsophisticated boxes of the ear we ever beheld. It sent her rolling half over the room, and made her come to a most ludicrous pause, with the oddest little look of premature and wincing meditation.

That lapping of the milk out of the saucer is what one's human thirst cannot sympathise with. It seems as if there could be no satisfaction in such a series of atoms of drink. Yet the saucer is soon emptied; and there is a refreshment to one's ears in that sound of plashing with which the action is accompanied, and which seems indicative of a like comfort to Pussy's mouth. Her tongue is thin, and can make a spoon of itself. This, however, is common to other quadrupeds with the cat, and does not, therefore, more particularly belong to our feline consideration. Not so the electricity of its coat, which gives out sparks under the hand; its passion for the herb valerian (did the reader ever see one roll in it? it is a mad sight) and other singular delicacies of nature, among which, perhaps, is to be reckoned its taste for fish, a creature with whose element it has so little to do, that it is supposed even to abhor it; though lately we read somewhere of a swimming cat, that used to fish for itself. And this reminds us of an exquisite anecdote of dear, dogmatic,

diseased, thoughtful, surly, charitable Johnson, who would go out of doors himself, and buy oysters for his cat, because his black servant was too proud to do it! Not that we condemn the black, in those enslaving, unliberating days. He had a right to the mistake, though we should have thought better of him had he seen farther, and subjected his pride to affection for such a master. But Johnson's true practical delicacy in the matter is beautiful. Be assured that he thought nothing of "condescension" in it, or of being eccentric. He was singular in some things, because he could not help it. But he hated eccentricity. No: in his best moments he felt himself simply to be a man, and a good man too, though a frail—one that in virtue as well as humility, and in a knowledge of his ignorance as well as his wisdom, was desirous of being a Christian philosopher; and accordingly he went out, and bought food for his hungry cat, because his poor negro was too proud to do it, and there was nobody else in the way whom he had a right to ask. What must anybody that saw him have thought, as he turned up Bolt Court! But doubtless he went as secretly as possible, —that is to say, if he considered the thing at all. His friend Garrick could not have done as much! He was too grand, and on the great "stage" of life. Goldsmith could; but he would hardly have thought of it. Beauclerc might; but he would have thought it necessary to excuse it with a jest or a wager, or some such thing. Sir Joshua Reynolds, with his fashionable, fine-lady-painting hand, would certainly have shrunk from it. Burke would have reasoned himself into its propriety, but he would have reasoned himself out again. Gibbon! Imagine its being put into the head of Gibbon!! He and his bag-wig would have started with all the horror of a gentleman-usher; and he would have rung the bell for the cook's-deputy's-under-assistant-errand-boy.

Cats at firesides live luxuriously, and are the picture of comfort; but lest they should not bear their portion of trouble in this world, they have the drawbacks of being liable to be shut out of doors on cold nights, beatings from the "aggravated" cooks, overpettings of children (how should we like to be squeezed and pulled about in that manner by some great patronising giants?) and last, not least, horrible merciless tramples of unconscious human feet and unfeeling legs of chairs. Elegance, comfort, and security seem the order of the day on all sides, and you are going to sit down to dinner, or to music, or to take tea, when all of a sudden the cat gives a squall as if

she was mashed; and you are not sure that the fact is otherwise. Yet she gets in the way again, as before; and dares all the feet and mahogany in the room. Beautiful present sufficingness of a cat's imagination! Confined to the snug circle of her own sides, and the two next inches of rug or carpet.

DEATHS OF LITTLE CHILDREN

A Grecian philosopher being asked why he wept for the death of his son, since the sorrow was in vain, replied, "I weep on that very account." And his answer became his wisdom. It is only for sophists to pretend, that we, whose eyes contain the fountains of tears, need never give way to them. It would be unwise not to do so on some occasions. Sorrow unlocks them in her balmy moods. The first bursts may be bitter and overwhelming; but the soil on which they pour, would be the worse without them. They refresh the fever of the soul —the dry misery which parches the countenance into furrows, and renders us liable to our most terrible "flesh-quakes."

There are sorrows, it is true, so great, that to give them some of the ordinary vents is to run a hazard of being overthrown. These we must rather strengthen ourselves to resist, or bow quietly and dryly down, in order to let them pass over us, as the traveller does the wind of the desert. But where we feel that tears would relieve us, it is false philosophy to deny ourselves at least that first refreshment; and it is always false consolation to tell people that because they cannot help a thing, they are not to mind it. The true way is, to let them grapple with the unavoidable sorrow, and try to win it into gentleness by a reasonable yielding. There are griefs so gentle in their very nature, that it would be worse than false heroism to refuse them a tear. Of this kind are the deaths of infants. Particular circumstances may render it more or less advisable not to indulge in grief for the loss of a little child; but, in general, parents should be no more advised to repress their first tears on such an occasion, than to repress their smiles towards a child surviving, or to indulge in any other sympathy. It is an appeal to the same gentle tenderness; and such appeals are never made in vain. The end of them is an acquittal from the harsher bonds of affliction—from the tying down of the spirit to one melancholy idea.

It is the nature of tears of this kind, however strongly they may gush forth, to run into quiet waters at last. We cannot easily, for the whole course of our lives, think with pain of any good and kind person whom we have lost. It is the divine nature of their qualities to conquer pain and death itself; to turn the memory of them into pleasure; to survive with a placid aspect in our imaginations. We are writing at this moment just opposite a spot which contains the grave of one[1] inexpressibly dear to us. We see from our window the trees about it, and the church spire. The green fields lie around. The clouds are travelling overhead, alternately taking away the sunshine and restoring it. The vernal winds, piping of the flowery summer-time, are nevertheless calling to mind the far-distant and dangerous ocean, which the heart that lies in that grave had many reasons to think of. And yet the sight of this spot does not give us pain. So far from it, it is the existence of that grave which doubles every charm of the spot; which links the pleasures of our childhood and manhood together; which puts a hushing tenderness in the winds, and a patient joy upon the landscape; which seems to unite heaven and earth, mortality and immortality, the grass of the tomb and the grass of the green field; and gives a more maternal aspect to the whole kindness of nature. It does not hinder gaiety itself. Happiness was what its tenant, through all her troubles, would have diffused. To diffuse happiness and to enjoy it, is not only carrying on her wishes, but realising her hopes; and gaiety, freed from its only pollutions, malignity and want of sympathy, is but a child playing about the knees of its mother.

The remembered innocence and endearments of a child stand us instead of virtues that have died older. Children have not exercised the voluntary offices of friendship; they have not chosen to be kind and good to us; nor stood by us, from conscious will, in the hour of adversity. But they have shared their pleasures and pains with us as well as they could; the interchange of good offices between us has, of necessity, been less mingled with the troubles of the world; the sorrow arising from their death is the only one which we can associate with their memories. These are happy thoughts that cannot die. Our loss may always render them pensive; but they will not always be painful. It is a part of the benignity of Nature that pain does not survive like pleasure, at any time, much less where the cause of it is an innocent one. The smile will remain

[1] His mother.

reflected by memory, as the moon reflects the light upon us when the sun has gone into heaven.

When writers like ourselves quarrel with earthly pain (we mean writers of the same intentions, without implying, of course, anything about abilities or otherwise), they are misunderstood if they are supposed to quarrel with pains of every sort. This would be idle and effeminate. They do not pretend, indeed, that humanity might not wish, if it could, to be entirely free from pain; for it endeavours, at all times, to turn pain into pleasure: or at least to set off the one with the other, to make the former a zest and the latter a refreshment. The most unaffected dignity of suffering does this, and, if wise, acknowledges it. The greatest benevolence towards others, the most unselfish relish of their pleasures, even at its own expense, does but look to increasing the general stock of happiness, though content, if it could, to have its identity swallowed up in that splendid contemplation. We are far from meaning that this is to be called selfishness. We are far, indeed, from thinking so, or of so confounding words. But neither is it to be called pain when most unselfish, if disinterestedness be truly understood. The pain that is in it softens into pleasure, as the darker hue of the rainbow melts into the brighter. Yet even if a harsher line is to be drawn between the pain and pleasure of the most unselfish mind (and ill-health, for instance, may draw it), we should not quarrel with it if it contributed to the general mass of comfort, and were of a nature which general kindliness could afford. Made as we are, there are certain pains without which it would be difficult to conceive certain great and over-balancing pleasures. We may conceive it possible for beings to be made entirely happy; but in our composition something of pain seems to be a necessary ingredient, in order that the materials may turn to as fine account as possible, though our clay, in the course of ages and experience, may be refined more and more. We may get rid of the worst earth, though not of earth itself.

Now the liability to the loss of children—or rather what renders us sensible of it, the occasional loss itself—seems to be one of these necessary bitters thrown into the cup of humanity. We do not mean that everybody must lose one of his children in order to enjoy the rest; or that every individual loss afflicts us in the same proportion. We allude to the deaths of infants in general. These might be as few as we could render them. But if none at all ever took place, we should regard every little child as a man or woman secured; and it will easily be conceived

what a world of endearing cares and hopes this security would endanger. The very idea of infancy would lose its continuity with us. Girls and boys would be future men and women, not present children. They would have attained their full growth in our imaginations, and might as well have been men and women at once. On the other hand, those who have lost an infant, are never, as it were, without an infant child. They are the only persons who, in one sense, retain it always, and they furnish their neighbours with the same idea. The other children grow up to manhood and womanhood, and suffer all the changes of mortality. This one alone is rendered an immortal child. Death has arrested it with his kindly harshness, and blessed it into an eternal image of youth and innocence.

Of such as these are the pleasantest shapes that visit our fancy and our hopes. They are the ever-smiling emblems of joy; the prettiest pages that wait upon imagination. Lastly, "Of these are the kingdom of heaven." Wherever there is a province of that benevolent and all-accessible empire, whether on earth or elsewhere, such are the gentle spirits that must inhabit it. To such simplicity, or the resemblance of it, must they come. Such must be the ready confidence of their hearts, and creativeness of their fancy. And so ignorant must they be of the "knowledge of good and evil," losing their discernment of that self-created trouble, by enjoying the garden before them, and not being ashamed of what is kindly and innocent.

CHILD-BED

A PROSE POEM

And is childbed among the graces, with its close room, and its unwilling or idle visitors, and its jesting nurse (the old and indecent stranger), and its unmotherly, and unwifely, and unlovely lamentations? Is pain so unpleasant that love cannot reconcile it? And can pleasures be repeated without shame, which are regretted with hostile cries and resentment?

No. But childbed is among the graces, with the handsome quiet of its preparation, and the smooth pillow sustaining emotion, and the soft steps of love and respect, and the room

in which the breath of the universe is gratefully permitted to enter, and mild and venerable aid, and the physician (the urbane security), and the living treasure containing treasure about to live, who looks in the eyes of him that caused it and seeks energy in the grappling of his hand, and hides her face in the pillow that she may save him a pain by stifling a greater. There is a tear for what may have been done wrong, ever; and what may never to be mutually pardoned again; but it is gone, for what needs it? Angelical are their whispers apart; and Pleasure meets Pain the seraph, and knows itself to be noble in the smiling testimony of his severity.

It was on a May evening, in a cottage flowering with the greengage in the time of hyacinths and new hopes, when the hand that wrote this took the hand that had nine times lain thin and delicate on the bed of a mother's endurance; and he kissed it, like a bride's.

AN EARTH UPON HEAVEN

Somebody, a little while ago, wrote an excellent article in the *New Monthly Magazine* on "Persons one would wish to have known." He should write another on "Persons one could wish to have dined with." There is Rabelais, and Horace, and the "Mermaid" roysters, and Charles Cotton, and Andrew Marvell, and Sir Richard Steele, *cum multis aliis*: and for the colloquial, if not the festive part, Swift and Pope, and Dr. Johnson, and Burke, and Horne Tooke. What a pity one cannot dine with them all round! People are accused of having earthly notions of heaven. As it is difficult to have any other, we may be pardoned for thinking that we could spend a very pretty thousand years in dining and getting acquainted with all the good fellows on record; and having got used to them, we think we could go very well on, and be content to wait some other thousands for a higher beatitude. Oh, to wear out one of the celestial lives of a triple century's duration, and exquisitely to grow old, in reciprocating dinners and teas with the immortals of old books! Will Fielding "leave his card" in the next world? Will Berkeley (an angel in a wig and lawn sleeves!) come to ask how Utopia gets on? Will Shakespeare (for the greater the man, the more the good-nature might be expected) know by

intuition that one of his readers (knocked up with bliss) is dying to see him at the "Angel" and "Turk's Head," and come lounging with his hands in his doublet-pockets accordingly?

It is a pity that none of the great geniuses, to whose lot it has fallen to describe a future state, has given us his own notions of heaven. Their accounts are all modified by the national theology; whereas the Apostle himself has told us, that we can have no conception of the blessings intended for us. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," etc. After this, Dante's shining lights are poor. Milton's heaven, with the armed youth exercising themselves in military games, is worse. His best Paradise was on earth, and a very pretty heaven he made of it. For our parts, admitting and venerating as we do the notion of a heaven surpassing all human conception, we trust that it is no presumption to hope, that the state mentioned by the Apostle is the *final* heaven; and that we may ascend and gradually accustom ourselves to the intensity of it, by others of a less superhuman nature. Familiar as we may be both with poetry and calamity, and accustomed to surprises and strange sights of imagination, it is difficult to fancy even the delight of suddenly emerging into a new and boundless state of existence, where everything is marvellous, and opposed to our experience. We could wish to take gently to it; to be loosed not entirely at once. Our song desires to be "a song of degrees." Earth and its capabilities—are these nothing? And are they to come to nothing? Is there no beautiful realisation of the fleeting type that is shown us? No body to this shadow? No quenching to this [drought] and continued thirst? No arrival at these natural homes and resting-places, which are so heavenly to our imaginations, even though they be built of clay, and are situate in the fields of our infancy? We are becoming graver than we intended; but to return to our proper style:—nothing shall persuade us, for the present, that Paradise Mount, in any pretty village in England, has not another Paradise Mount to correspond, in some less perishing region; that is to say, provided anybody has set his heart upon it:—and that we shall not all be dining, and drinking tea, and complaining of the weather (we mean, for its not being perfectly blissful) three hundred years hence, in some snug interlunar spot, or perhaps in the moon itself, seeing that it is our next visible neighbour, and shrewdly suspected of being hill and dale.

It appears to us, that for a certain term of centuries, heaven *must* consist of something of this kind. In a word, we cannot

but persuade ourselves, that to realise everything that we have justly desired on earth, will *be* heaven;—we mean, for that period: and that afterwards, if we behave ourselves in a proper pre-angelical manner, we shall go to another heaven, still better where we shall realise all that we desired in our first. Of this latter we can as yet have no conception; but of the former we think some of the items may be as follow:

Imprimis,—(not because friendship comes before love in point of degree, but because it precedes it, in point of time, as at school we have a male companion before we are old enough to have a female)—*Imprimis* then, a friend. He will have the same tastes and inclinations as ourselves, with just enough difference to furnish argument without sharpness; and he will be generous, just, entertaining, and no shirker of his nectar. In short, he will be the best friend we have had upon earth. We shall talk together "of afternoons"; and when the *Earth* begins to rise (a great big moon, looking as happy as we know its inhabitants *will* be), other friends will join us, not so emphatically our friend as he, but excellent fellows all; and we shall read the poets, and have some sphere-music (if we please), or renew one of our old earthly evenings, picked out of a dozen Christmases.

Item, a mistress. In heaven (not to speak it profanely) we know, upon the best authority, that people are "neither married nor given in marriage"; so that there is nothing illegal in the term. (By the way, there can be no clergymen there, if there are no official duties for them. We do not say, there will be nobody who has been a clergyman. Berkeley would refute that; and a hundred Welsh curates. But they would be no longer in orders. They would refuse to call themselves more Reverend than their neighbours.) *Item* then, a mistress, beautiful, of course,—an angelical expression,—a Peri, or Houri, or whatever shape of perfection you choose to imagine her, and yet retaining the likeness of the woman you loved best on earth, in fact, she herself, but completed; all her good qualities made perfect, and all her defects taken away (with the exception of one or two charming little angelical peccadilloes, which she can only get rid of in a post-future state); good-tempered, laughing, serious, fond of everything about her without detriment to her special fondness for yourself, a great roamer in Elysian fields and forests, but not alone (they go in pairs there, as the jays and turtle-doves do with us); but above all things, true; oh so true, that you take her word as you would a diamond, nothing being more transparent, or solid, or precious. Betwee

writing some divine poem, and meeting our friends of an evening, we should walk with her, or fly (for we should have wings, of course) like a couple of human bees or doves, extracting delight from every flower, and with delight filling every shade. There is something too good in this to dwell upon; so we spare the fears and hopes of the prudish. We would lay her head upon our heart, and look more pleasure into her eyes, than the prudish or the profligate ever so much as fancied.

Item, books. Shakespeare and Spenser should write us *new ones*! Think of that. We would have another *Decameron*: and Walter Scott (for he will be there too;—we mean to beg Hume to introduce us) shall write us forth more novels, all as good as the Scotch ones; and Radical well as as Tory shall love him. It is true, we speak professionally, when we mention books.

> We think, admitted to that equal sky,
> The *Arabian Nights* must bear us company.

When Gainsborough died, he expired in a painter's enthusiasm, saying, "We are all going to heaven, and Vandyke is of the party."—He had a proper foretaste. Virgil had the same light, when he represented the old heroes enjoying in Elysium their favourite earthly pursuits; only one cannot help thinking, with the natural modesty of reformers, that the taste in this our interlunar heaven will be benefited from time to time by the knowledge of new-comers. We cannot well fancy a celestial ancient Briton delighting himself with painting his skin, or a Chinese angel hobbling a mile up the Milky Way in order to show herself to advantage.

For breakfast, we must have a tea beyond anything Chinese. Slaves will certainly not make the sugar; but there will be cows for the milk. One's landscapes cannot do without cows.

For horses we shall ride a Pegasus, or Ariosto's Hippogriff, or Sindbad's Roc. We mean, for our parts, to ride them all, having a passion for fabulous animals. Fable will be no fable then. We shall have just as much of it as we like; and the Utilitarians will be astonished to find how much of that sort of thing will be in request. They will look very odd, by the by,—those gentlemen, when they first arrive; but will soon get used to the delight, and find there was more of it in their own doctrine than they imagined.

The weather will be extremely fine, but not without such varieties as shall hinder it from being tiresome. April will dress the whole country in diamonds; and there will be enough

cold in winter to make a fire pleasant of an evening. The fire will be made of sweet-smelling turf and sunbeams; but it will have a look of coal. If we choose, now and then we shall even have inconveniences.

THOUGHTS AND GUESSES ON HUMAN NATURE

DEATH

Of all impositions on the public, the greatest seems to be death. It resembles the threatening faces on each side the Treasury. Or rather, it is a necessary bar to our tendency to move forward. Nature sends us out of her hand with such an impetus towards increase of enjoyment, that something is obliged to be set up at the end of the avenue we are in, to moderate our bias, and make us enjoy the present being. Death serves to make us think, not of itself, but of what is about us.

DEGRADING IDEAS OF DEITY

The superstitious, in their contradictory representations of God, call him virtuous and benevolent out of the same passion of fear as induces them to make him such a tyrant. They think they shall be damned if they do not believe him the tyrant he is described:—they think they shall be damned also, if they do not gratuitously ascribe to him the virtues incompatible with damnation. Being so unworthy of praise, they think he will be particularly angry at not being praised. They shudder to think themselves better; and hasten to make amends for it, by declaring themselves as worthless as he is worthy.

GREAT DISTINCTION TO BE MADE IN BIGOTS

There are two sorts of religious bigots, the unhealthy and the unfeeling. The fear of the former is mixed with humanity, and they never succeed in thinking themselves favourites of God, but their sense of security is embittered, by aversions which they dare not own to themselves, and terror for the fate of those who are not so lucky. The unfeeling bigot is a mere unimaginative animal, whose thoughts are confined to the

snugness of his own kennel, and who would have a good one in the next world as well as in this. He secures a place in heaven as he does in the Manchester coach or a Margate hoy. Never mind who suffers outside, woman or child. We once found ourselves by accident on board a Margate hoy, which professed to "sail by Divine Providence." Walking about the deck at night to get rid of the chillness which would occasionally visit our devotions to the starry heavens and the sparkling sea, our foot came in contact with something white, which was lying gathered up in a heap. Upon stooping down, we found it to be a woman. The methodists had secured all the beds below, and were not to be disturbed.

GETTING UP ON COLD MORNINGS

An Italian author—Giulio Cordara, a Jesuit—has written a poem upon insects, which he begins by insisting, that those troublesome and abominable little animals were created for our annoyance, and that they were certainly not inhabitants of Paradise. We of the north may dispute this piece of theology; but on the other hand, it is as clear as the snow on the house-tops, that Adam was not under the necessity of shaving; and that when Eve walked out of her delicious bower, she did not step upon ice three inches thick.

Some people say it is a very easy thing to get up of a cold morning. You have only, they tell you, to take the resolution; and the thing is done. This may be very true; just as a boy at school has only to take a flogging, and the thing is over. But we have not at all made up our minds upon it; and we find it a very pleasant exercise to discuss the matter, candidly, before we get up. This at least is not idling, though it may be lying. It affords an excellent answer to those, who ask how lying in bed can be indulged in by a reasoning being,—a rational creature. How? Why with the argument calmly at work in one's head, and the clothes over one's shoulder. Oh—it is a fine way of spending a sensible, impartial half-hour.

If these people would be more charitable, they would get on with their argument better. But they are apt to reason so ill, and to assert so dogmatically, that one could wish to have them

stand round one's bed of a bitter morning, and lie before their faces. They ought to hear both sides of the bed, the inside and out. If they cannot entertain themselves with their own thoughts for half an hour or so, it is not the fault of those who can. If their will is never pulled aside by the enticing arms of imagination, so much the luckier for the stage-coachman.

Candid inquiries into one's decumbency, besides the greater or less privileges to be allowed a man in proportion to his ability of keeping early hours, the work given his faculties, etc., will at least concede their due merits to such representations as the following. In the first place, says the injured but calm appealer, I have been warm all night, and find my system in a state perfectly suitable to a warm-blooded animal. To get out of this state into the cold, besides the inharmonious and uncritical abruptness of the transition, is so unnatural to such a creature, that the poets, refining upon the tortures of the damned, make one of their greatest agonies consist in being suddenly transported from heat to cold,—from fire to ice. They are "haled" out of their "beds," says Milton, by "harpy-footed furies,"—fellows who come to call them. On my first movement towards the anticipation of getting up, I find that such parts of the sheets and bolster, as are exposed to the air of the room, are stone-cold. On opening my eyes, the first thing that meets them is my own breath rolling forth, as if in the open air, like smoke out of a cottage chimney. Think of this symptom. Then I turn my eyes sideways and see the window all frozen over. Think of that. Then the servant comes in. "It is very cold this morning, is it not?"—"Very cold, Sir,"—"Very cold indeed, isn't it?"—"Very cold indeed, Sir."—"More than usually so, isn't it, even for this weather?" (Here the servant's wit and good-nature are put to a considerable test, and the inquirer lies on thorns for the answer.) "Why, Sir . . . I think it *is*." (Good creature! There is not a better, or more truth-telling servant going.) "I must rise, however—get me some warm water."—Here comes a fine interval between the departure of the servant and the arrival of the hot water; during which, of course, it is of "no use" to get up. The hot water comes. "Is it quite hot?"—"Yes, Sir."—"Perhaps too hot for shaving: I must wait a little?" —"No, Sir; It will just do." (There is an over-nice propriety sometimes, an officious zeal of virtue, a little troublesome.) "Oh—the shirt—you must air my clean shirt;—linen gets very damp this weather."—"Yes, Sir." Here another delicious

five minutes. A knock at the door. "Oh, the shirt—very well. My stockings—I think the stockings had better be aired too."—"Very well, Sir."—Here another interval. At length everything is ready, except myself. I now, continues our incumbent (a happy word, by the by, for a country vicar)—I now cannot help thinking a good deal—who can?—upon the unnecessary and villainous custom of shaving: it is a thing so unmanly (here I nestle closer)—so effeminate (here I recoil from an unlucky step into the colder part of the bed).—No wonder that the Queen of France took part with the rebels against the degenerate King, her husband, who first affronted her smooth visage with a face like her own. The Emperor Julian never showed the luxuriancy of his genius to better advantage than in reviving the flowing beard. Look at Cardinal Bembo's picture—at Michael Angelo's—at Titian's—at Shakespeare's—at Fletcher's—at Spenser's—at Chaucer's—at Alfred's—at Plato's—I could name a great man for every tick of my watch.—Look at the Turks, a grave and otiose people.—Think of Haroun Al Raschid and Bed-ridden Hassan.—Think of Wortley Montague, the worthy son of his mother, a man above the prejudice of his time.—Look at the Persian gentlemen, whom one is ashamed of meeting about the suburbs, their dress and appearance are so much finer than our own.—Lastly, think of the razor itself—how totally opposed to every sensation of bed—how cold, how edgy, how hard! how utterly different from anything like the warm and circling amplitude, which

> Sweetly recommends itself
> Unto our gentle senses.

Add to this, benumbed fingers, which may help you to cut yourself, a quivering body, a frozen towel, and a ewer full of ice; and he that says there is nothing to oppose in all this, only shows, at anyrate, that he has no merit in opposing it.

Thomson the poet, who exclaims in his *Seasons*:

> Falsely luxurious! Will not man awake?

used to lie in bed till noon, because he said he had no motive in getting up. He could imagine the good of rising; but then he could also imagine the good of lying still; and his exclamation, it must be allowed, was made upon summer-time, not winter. We must proportion the argument to the individual character. A money-getter may be drawn out of his bed by three or four pence; but this will not suffice for a student. A proud man may say, "What shall I think of myself, if I don't get up?" but the

more humble one will be content to waive this prodigious notion of himself, out of respect to his kindly bed. The mechanical man shall get up without any ado at all; and so shall the barometer. An ingenious lier in bed will find hard matter of discussion even on the score of health and longevity. He will ask us for our proofs and precedents of the ill effects of lying later in cold weather; and sophisticate much on the advantages of an even temperature of body; of the natural propensity (pretty universal) to have one's way; and of the animals that roll themselves up, and sleep all the winter. As to longevity, he will ask whether the longest life is of necessity the best; and whether Holborn is the handsomest street in London.

We only know of one confounding, not to say confounded argument, fit to overturn the huge luxury, the "enormous bliss"—of the vice in question. A lier in bed may be allowed to profess a disinterested indifference for his health or longevity; but while he is showing the reasonableness of consulting his own or one person's comfort, he must admit the proportionate claim of more than one; and the best way to deal with him is this, especially for a lady; for we earnestly recommend the use of that sex on such occasions, if not somewhat *over*-persuasive; since extremes have an awkward knack of meeting. First then, admit all the ingeniousness of what he says, telling him that the Bar has been deprived of an excellent lawyer. Then look at him in the most good-natured manner in the world, with a mixture of assent and appeal in your countenance, and tell him that you are waiting breakfast for him; that you never like to breakfast without him; that you really want it too; that the servants want theirs; that you shall not know how to get the house into order, unless he rises; and that you are sure he would do things twenty times worse, even than getting out of his warm bed, to put them all into good humour and a state of comfort. Then, after having said this, throw in the comparatively indifferent matter, to *him*, about his health; but tell him that it is no indifferent matter to you; that the sight of his illness makes more people suffer than one; but that if, nevertheless, he really does feel so very sleepy and so very much refreshed by—— Yet stay; we hardly know whether the frailty of a—— Yes, yes; say that too, especially if you say it with sincerity; for if the weakness of human nature on the one hand and the *vis inertiæ* on the other, should lead him to take advantage of it once or twice, good-humour and sincerity

form an irresistible junction at last; and are still better and warmer things than pillows and blankets.

Other little helps of appeal may be thrown in, as occasion requires. You may tell a lover, for instance, that lying in bed makes people corpulent; a father, that you wish him to complete the fine manly example he sets his children; a lady, that she will injure her bloom or her shape, which M. or W. admires so much; and a student or artist, that he is always so glad to have done a good day's work, in his best manner.

Reader. And pray, Mr. Indicator, how do *you* behave yourself in this respect?

Indic. Oh, Madam, perfectly, of course; like all advisers.

Reader. Nay, I allow that your mode of argument does not look quite so suspicious as the old way of sermonising and severity, but I have my doubts, especially from that laugh of yours. If I should look in to-morrow morning——

Indic. Ah, Madam, the look in of a face like yours does anything with me. It shall fetch me up at nine, of you please —*six*, I meant to say.

A "NOW"

DESCRIPTIVE OF A HOT DAY

Now the rosy- (and lazy-) fingered Aurora, issuing from her saffron house, calls up the moist vapours to surround her, and goes veiled with them as long as she can; till Phœbus, coming forth in his power, looks everything out of the sky, and holds sharp uninterrupted empire from his throne of beams. Now the mower begins to make his sweeping cuts more slowly, and resorts oftener to the beer. Now the carter sleeps a-top of his load of hay, or plods with double slouch of shoulder, looking out with eyes winking under his shading hat, and with a hitch upward of one side of his mouth. Now the little girl at her grandmother's cottage-door watches the coaches that go by, with her hand held up over her sunny forehead. Now labourers look well resting in their white shirts at the doors of rural alehouses. Now an elm is fine there, with a seat under it; and horses drink out of the trough, stretching their yearning necks with loosened collars; and the traveller calls for his glass of ale, having been without one for more than ten minutes;

and his horse stands wincing at the flies, giving sharp shivers of his skin, and moving to and fro his ineffectual docked tail; and now Miss Betty Wilson, the host's daughter, comes streaming forth in a flowered gown and earrings, carrying with four of her beautiful fingers the foaming glass, for which, after the traveller has drank it, she receives with an indifferent eye, looking another way, the lawful twopence: that is to say, unless the traveller, nodding his ruddy face, pays some gallant compliment to her before he drinks, such as, "I'd rather kiss you, my dear, than the tumbler," or, "I'll wait for you, my love, if you'll marry me"; upon which, if the man is good-looking and the lady in good-humour, she smiles and bites her lips, and says, "Ah, men can talk fast enough"; upon which the old stage-coachman, who is buckling something near her, before he sets off, says in a hoarse voice, "So can women too for that matter," and John Boots grins through his ragged red locks and dotes on the repartee all the day after. Now grasshoppers "fry," as Dryden says. Now cattle stand in water, and ducks are envied. Now boots, and shoes, and trees by the roadside, are thick with dust; and dogs, rolling in it, after issuing out of the water, into which they have been thrown to fetch sticks, come scattering horror among the legs of the spectators. Now a fellow who finds he has three miles farther to go in a pair of tight shoes, is in a pretty situation. Now rooms with the sun upon them become intolerable; and the apothecary's apprentice, with a bitterness beyond aloes, thinks of the pond he used to bathe in at school. Now men with powdered heads (especially if thick) envy those that are unpowdered, and stop to wipe them up hill, with countenances that seem to expostulate with destiny. Now boys assemble round the village pump with a ladle to it, and delight to make a forbidden splash and get wet through the shoes. Now also they make suckers of leather, and bathe all day long in rivers and ponds, and follow the fish into their cool corners and say millions of "MY eyes!" at "tittlebats." Now the bee, as he hums along, seems to be talking heavily of the heat. Now doors and brick-walls are burning to the hand; and a walled lane, with dust and broken bottles in it, near a brick-field, is a thing not to be thought of. Now a green lane, on the contrary, thick-set with hedgerow elms, and having the noise of a brook "rumbling in pebble-stone," is one of the pleasantest things in the world. Now youths and damsels walk through hayfields, by chance, and the latter say, "Ha' done then, William"; and the overseer in the next field calls

out to "let thic thear hay thear bide"; and the girls persist, merely to plague "such a frumpish old fellow."

Now, in town, gossips talk more than ever to one another, in rooms, in doorways, and out of windows, always beginning the conversation with saying that the heat is overpowering. Now blinds are let down, and doors thrown open, and flannel waistcoats left off, and cold meat preferred to hot, and wonder expressed why tea continues so refreshing, and people delight to sliver lettuces into bowls, and apprentices water doorways with tin canisters that lay several atoms of dust. Now the water-cart, jumbling along the middle of the street, and jolting the showers out of its box of water, really does something. Now fruiterers' shops and dairies look pleasant, and ices are the only things to those who can get them. Now ladies loiter in baths; and people make presents of flowers; and wine is put into ice; and the after-dinner lounger recreates his head with applications of perfumed water out of long-necked bottles. Now the lounger, who cannot resist riding his new horse, feels his boots burn him. Now buckskins are not the lawn of Cos. Now jockeys, walking in great-coats to lose flesh, curse inwardly. Now five fat people in a stage-coach hate the sixth fat one who is coming in, and think he has no right to be so large. Now clerks in office do nothing but drink soda-water and spruce-beer, and read the newspaper. Now the old-clothesman drops his solitary cry more deeply into the areas on the hot and forsaken side of the street; and bakers look vicious; and cooks are aggravated; and the stream of a tavern-kitchen catches hold of one like the breath of Tartarus. Now delicate skins are beset with gnats; and boys make their sleeping companion start up, with playing a burning-glass on his hand; and blacksmiths are super-carbonated; and cobblers in their stalls almost feel a wish to be transplanted; and butter is too easy to spread; and the dragoons wonder whether the Romans liked their helmets; and old ladies, with their lappets unpinned, walk along in a state of dilapidation; and the servant-maids are afraid they look vulgarly hot; and the author, who has a plate of strawberries brought him, finds that he has come to the end of his writing.

We cannot conclude this article, however, without returning thanks, both on our own account and on that of our numerous predecessors, who have left so large a debt of gratitude unpaid, to this very useful and ready monosyllable—"Now." We are sure that there is not a didactic poet, ancient or modern, who,

if he possessed a decent share of candour, would not be happy to own his obligations to that masterly conjunction,' which possesses the very essence of wit, for it has the art of bringing the most remote things together. And its generosity is in proportion to its wit, for it always is most profuse of its aid where it is most wanted.

We must enjoy a pleasant passage with the reader on the subject of this "eternal Now" in Beaumont and Fletcher's play of the *Woman-Hater*.

A "NOW"

DESCRIPTIVE OF A COLD DAY

Now, all amid the rigours of the year.—THOMSON.

A FRIEND tells us, that having written a "Now," descriptive of a hot day (see previous essay), we ought to write another, descriptive of a cold one; and accordingly we do so. It happens that we are, at this minute, in a state at once fit and unfit for the task, being in the condition of the little boy at school, who, when asked the Latin for "cold," said he had it "at his fingers' ends"; but this helps us to set off with a right taste of our subject; and the fire, which is clicking in our ear, shall soon enable us to handle it comfortably in other respects.

Now, then, to commence.—But first, the reader who is good-natured enough to have a regard for these papers, may choose to be told of the origin of the use of this word Now, in case he is not already acquainted with it. It was suggested to us by the striking convenience it affords to descriptive writers, such as Thomson and others, who are fond of beginning their paragraphs with it, thereby saving themselves a world of trouble in bringing about a nicer conjunction of the various parts of their subject.

Now when the first foul torrent of the brooks—
Now flaming up to heaven, the potent sun—
Now when the cheerless empire of the sky—
But now—
When now—
Where now—
For now—etc.

We say nothing of similar words among other nations, or of

a certain *But* of the Greeks which was as useful to them on all occasions as the *And so* of the little children's stories. Our business is with our old indigenous friend. No other *Now* can be so present, so instantaneous, so extremely *Now*, as our own Now. The now of the Latins,—*Nunc*, or *Jam*, as he sometimes calls himself,—is a fellow of past ages. He is no Now. And the *Nun* of the Greek is older. How can there be a *Now* which was *Then*? a "*Now-then*," as we sometimes barbarously phrase it. "Now *and* then" is intelligible; but "Now-then" is an extravagance, fit only for the delicious moments of a gentleman about to crack his bottle, or to run away with a lady, or to open a dance, or to carve a turkey and chine, or to pelt snowballs, or to commit some other piece of ultra-vivacity, such as excuses a man from the nicer proprieties of language.

But to begin.

Now the moment people wake in the morning, they perceive the coldness with their faces, though they are warm with their bodies, and exclaim "Here's a day!" and pity the poor little sweep, and the boy with the water-cresses. How anybody can go to a cold ditch, and gather water-cresses, seems marvellous. Perhaps we hear great lumps in the street of something falling; and, looking through the window, perceive the roofs of the neighbouring houses thick with snow. The breath is visible, issuing from the mouth as we lie. Now we hate getting up, and hate shaving, and hate the empty grate in one's bed-room; and water freezes in ewers, and you may set the towel upright on its own hardness, and the window-panes are frost-whitened, or it is foggy, and the sun sends a dull, brazen beam into one's room; or, if it is fine, the windows outside are stuck with icicles; or a detestable thaw has begun, and they drip; but, at all events, it is horribly cold, and delicate shavers fidget about their chambers looking distressed, and cherish their hard-hearted enemy, the razor, in their bosoms, to warm him a little, and coax him into a consideration of their chins. Savage is a cut, and makes them think destiny really too hard.

Now breakfast is fine; and the fire seems to laugh at us as we enter the breakfast-room, and say "Ha! ha! here's a better room than the bed-chamber!" and we always poke it before we do anything else; and people grow selfish about seats near it; and little boys think their elders tyrannical for saying, "Oh, *you* don't want the fire; your blood is young." And truly that is not the way of stating the case, albeit young blood is warmer than old. Now the butter is too hard to spread; and the rolls

and toast are at their maximum; and the former look glorious as they issue, smoking, out of the flannel in which they come from the baker's; and people who come with single knocks at the door are pitied; and the voices of boys are loud in the street, sliding or throwing snow-balls; and the dustman's bell sounds cold; and we wonder how anybody can go about selling fish, especially with that hoarse voice; and schoolboys hate their slates, and blow their fingers, and detest infinitely the no-fire at school; and the parish-beadle's nose is redder than ever.

Now sounds in general are dull, and smoke out of chimneys looks warm and rich, and birds are pitied, hopping about for crumbs, and the trees look wiry and cheerless, albeit they are still beautiful to imaginative eyes, especially the evergreens, and the birch with boughs like dishevelled hair. Now mud in roads is stiff, and the kennel ices over, and boys make illegal slides in the pathways, and ashes are strewed before doors; or you crunch the snow as you tread, or kick mud-flakes before you, or are horribly muddy in cities. But if it is a hard frost, all the world is buttoned up and great-coated, except ostentatious elderly gentlemen, and pretended beggars with naked feet; and the delicious sound of "All hot" is heard from roasted apple and potato stalls, the vendor himself being cold, in spite of his "hot," and stamping up and down to warm his feet; and the little boys are astonished to think how he can eat bread and cold meat for his dinner, instead of the smoking apples.

Now skaters are on the alert; the cutlers' shop-windows abound with their swift shoes; and as you approach the scene of action (pond or canal) you hear the dull grinding noise of the skates to and fro, and see tumbles, and Banbury cake-men and blackguard boys playing "hockey," and ladies standing shivering on the banks, admiring anybody but their brother, especially the gentleman who is cutting figures of eight, who, for his part, is admiring his own figure. Beginners affect to laugh at their tumbles, but are terribly angry, and long to thump the bystanders. On thawing days, idlers persist to the last in skating or sliding amidst the slush and bending ice, making the Humane-Society-man ferocious. He feels as if he could give them the deaths from which it is his business to save them. When you have done skating, you come away feeling at once warm and numb in the feet, from the tight effect of the skates; and you carry them with an ostentatious air of indifference, as if you had done wonders; whereas you have fairly had three slips, and can barely achieve the inside edge.

Now riders look sharp, and horses seem brittle in the legs, and old gentlemen feel so; and coachmen, cabmen, and others, stand swinging their arms across at their sides to warm themselves; and blacksmiths' shops look pleasant, and potato shops detestable: the fishmongers' still more so. We wonder how he can live in that plash of wet and cold fish, without even a window. Now clerks in offices envy the one next the fire-place; and men from behind counters hardly think themselves repaid by being called out to speak to a countess in her chariot; and the wheezy and effeminate pastry-cook, hatless and aproned, and with his hand in his breeches-pockets (as the graphic Cruikshank noticeth in his almanac) stands outside his door, chilling his household warmth with attending to the ice which is brought him, and seeing it unloaded into his cellar like coals. Comfortable look the Miss Joneses, coming this way with their muffs and furs; and the baker pities the maid-servant cleaning the steps, who, for her part, says she is not cold, which he finds it difficult to believe.

Now dinner rejoiceth the gatherers together, and cold meat is despised, and the gout defieth the morrow, thinking it but reasonable on such a day to inflame itself with "t'other bottle"; and the sofa is wheeled round to the fire after dinner, and people proceed to burn their legs in their boots, and little boys their faces; and young ladies are tormented between the cold and their complexions, and their fingers freeze at the pianoforte, but they must not say so, because it will vex their poor comfortable grand-aunt, who is sitting with her knees in the fire, and who is so anxious that they should not be spoilt.

Now the muffin-bell soundeth sweetly in the streets, reminding us, not of the man, but his muffins, and of twilight, and evening, and curtains, and the fireside. Now playgoers get cold feet, and invalids stop up every crevice in their rooms, and make themselves worse; and the streets are comparatively silent; and the wind rises and falls in moanings; and fires burn blue and crackle; and an easy chair with your feet by it on a stool, the lamp or candles a little behind you, and an interesting book just opened where you left off, is a bit of heaven upon earth. People in cottages crowd close into the chimney, and tell stories of ghosts and murders, the blue flame affording something like evidence of the facts.

> The owl, with all her feathers, is a-cold,

or you think her so. The whole country feels like a petrifaction

of slate and stillness, cut across by the wind; and nobody in the mail-coach is warm but the horses, who steam pitifully when they stop. The "oldest man" makes a point of never having "seen such weather." People have a painful doubt whether they have any chins or not; ears ache with the wind; and the wagoner, setting his teeth together, goes puckering up his cheeks, and thinking the time will never arrive when he shall get to the "Five Bells."

At night, people get sleepy with the fireside, and long to go to bed, yet fear it on account of the different temperature of the bedroom; which is furthermore apt to wake them up. Warming-pans and hot-water bottles are in request; and naughty boys eschew their night-shirts, and go to bed in their socks.

"Yes," quoth a little boy, to whom we read this passage, "and make their younger brother go to bed first."

DAWN

See also the Satyr's account of dawn [in Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*], which opens with the four most exquisite lines perhaps in the whole play:

> See, the day begins to break,
> *And the light shoots like a streak.*
> *Of subtle fire. The wind blows cold,*
> *While the morning doth unfold.*

Who has not felt this mingled charmingness and chilliness (we do not use the words for the sake of the alliteration) at the first opening of the morning! Yet none but the finest poets venture upon thus combining pleasure with something that might be thought a drawback. But it is truth; and it is truth in which the beauty surmounts the pain; and therefore they give it. And how simple and straightforward is every word! There are no artificial tricks of composition here. The words are not suggested to the truth by the author, but to the author by the truth. We feel the wind blowing as simply as it does in nature; so that if the reader be artificially trained, and does not bring a feeling for truth with him analogous to that of the poet, the very simplicity is in danger of losing him the perception of the beauty. And yet there is art as well as nature in the verses;

for art in the poet must perfect what Nature does by her own art. Observe, for instance, the sudden and strong emphasis on the word *shoots*, and the variety of tone and modulation in the whole passage, and the judicious exceptions of the two *o*'s in the wind "blows cold," which have the solemn continuous sound of what it describes: also the corresponding ones in "doth unfold," which maintain the like continuity of the growing daylight. And exquisite, surely, is the dilatory and golden sound of the word "morning" between them:

The wind blows cold,
While the *mor*-ning doth unfold.

THE TRUE ENJOYMENT OF SPLENDOUR—A CHINESE APOLOGUE

DOUBTLESS, saith the illustrious Me, he that gaineth much possession hath need of the wrists of Hong and the seriousness of Shan-Fee, since palaces are not built with a teaspoon, nor are to be kept by one who runneth after butterflies. But above all it is necessary that he who carrieth a great burden, whether of gold or silver, should hold his head as lowly as is necessary, lest in lifting it on high he brings his treasure to nought, and lose with the spectators the glory of true gravity, which is meekness.

Quo, who was the son of Quee, who was the son of Quee-Fong, who was the five hundred and fiftieth in lineal descent from the ever-to-be-remembered Fing, chief minister of the Emperor Yau, one day walked out into the streets of Pekin in all the lustre of his rank. Quo, besides the greatness of his birth and the multitude of his accomplishments, was a courtier of the first order, and his pigtail was proportionate to his merits, for it hung down to the ground and kissed the dust as it went with its bunch of artificial roses. Ten huge and sparkling rings, which encrusted his hands with diamonds, and almost rivalled the sun that struck on them, led the ravished eyes of the beholders to the more precious enormity of his nails, which were each an inch long, and by proper nibbing might have taught the barbarians of the West to look with just scorn on their many writing-machines. But even these were nothing to the precious stones that covered him from head to foot. His bonnet,

in which a peacock's feather was stuck in a most engaging manner, was surmounted by a sapphire of at least the size of a pigeon's egg; his shoulders and sides sustained a real burden of treasure; and as he was one of the handsomest men at court, being exceedingly corpulent, and, indeed, as his flatterers gave out, hardly able to walk, it may be imagined that he proceeded at no undignified pace. He would have ridden in his sedan, had he been lighter of body; but so much unaffected corpulence was not to be concealed, and he went on foot that nobody might suspect him of pretending to a dignity he did not possess. Behind him, three servants attended, clad in most gorgeous silks; the middle one held his umbrella over his head; he on the right bore a fan of ivory, whereon were carved the exploits of Whay-Quang; and he on the left sustained a purple bag on each arm, one containing opium and Areca-nut, the other the ravishing preparation of Gin-Seng, which possesses the Five Relishes. All the servants looked the same way as their master—that is to say, straightforward, with their eyes majestically half-shut, only they cried every now and then with a loud voice, "Vanish before the illustrious Quo, favourite of the mighty Brother of the Sun and Moon."

Though the favourite looked neither to the right nor to the left, he could not but perceive the great homage that was paid him as well by the faces as the voices of the multitude. But one person, a Bonze, seemed transported beyond all the rest with an enthusiasm of admiration, and followed at a respectful distance from his side, bowing to the earth at every ten paces, and exclaiming, "Thanks to my lord for his jewels!" After repeating this for about six times, he increased the expression of his gratitude, and said, "Thanks to my illustrious lord from his poor servant for his glorious jewels," — and then again, "Thanks to my illustrious lord, whose eye knoweth not degradation, from his poor servant, who is not fit to exist before him, for his jewels that make the rays of the sun like ink." In short, the man's gratitude was so great, and its language delivered in phrases so choice, that Quo could contain his curiosity no longer, and turning aside, demanded to know his meaning. "I have not given you the jewels," said the favourite, "and why should you thank me for them?"

"Refulgent Quo!" answered the Bonze, again bowing to the earth, "what you say is as true as the five maxims of Fo, who was born without a father; but your slave repeats his thanks, and is indeed infinitely obliged. You must know, O dazzling

son of Quee, that of all my sect I have perhaps the greatest taste for enjoying myself. Seeing my lord therefore go by, I could not but be transported at having so great a pleasure, and said to myself, 'The great Quo is very kind to me and my fellow-citizens: he has taken infinite labour to acquire his magnificence, he takes still greater pains to preserve it, and all the while, I, who am lying under a shed, enjoy it for nothing.'"

A hundred years after, when the Emperor Whang heard this story, he diminished the expenditure of his household one-half, and ordered the dead Bonze to be raised to the rank of a Colao.

TABLE-TALK

TABLE-TALK, to be perfect, should be sincere without bigotry, differing without discord, sometimes grave, always agreeable, touching on deep points, dwelling most on seasonable ones, and letting everybody speak and be heard. During the wine after dinner, if the door of the room be opened, there sometimes comes bursting up the drawing-room stairs a noise like that of a tap-room. Everybody is shouting in order to make himself audible; argument is tempted to confound itself with loudness; and there is not one conversation going forward, but six, or a score. This is better than formality and want of spirits; but it is no more the right thing, than a scramble is a dance, or the tap-room chorus a quartette of Rossini. The perfection of conversational intercourse is when the breeding of high life is animated by the fervour of genius.

WIT MADE EASY

OR A HINT TO WORD-CATCHERS

A. Here comes B., the liveliest yet most tiresome of word-catchers. I wonder whether he'll have wit enough to hear good news of his mistress.—Well, B., my dear boy, I hope I see you well.

B. I hope you do, my dear A., otherwise you have lost your eyesight.

A. Good. Well, how do you do?

B. How? Why as other people do. You would not have me eccentric, would you?

A. Nonsense. I mean, how do you find yourself?

B. Find myself! Where's the necessity of finding myself? I have not been lost.

A. Incorrigible dog! come now; to be serious.

B. [*Comes closer to A., and looks very serious*].

A. Well, what now?

B. I am come, to be serious.

A. Come now; nonsense, B., leave off this.

[*Laying his hand on his arm.*

B. [*Looking down at his arm.*] I can't leave off this. It would look very absurd to go without a sleeve.

A. Ah, ha! You make me laugh in spite of myself. How's Jackson?

B. The deuce he is! How's Jackson, is he? Well, I never should have thought that. How can Howe be Jackson? "Surname and arms," I suppose, of some rich uncle? I have not seen him gazetted.

A. Good-bye.

B. [*Detaining him.*] "Good Bye!" What a sudden enthusiasm in favour of some virtuous man of the name of Bye! "*Good* Bye!"—To think of Ashton standing at the corner of the street, doting aloud on the integrity of a Mr. Bye!

A. Ludicrous enough. I can't help laughing, I confess. But laughing does not always imply merriment. You do not delight us, Jack, with these sort of jokes, but tickle us; and tickling may give pain.

B. Don't accept it then. You need not take everything that is given you.

A. You'll want a straightforward answer some day, and then——

B. You'll describe a circle about me, before you give it. Well, that's your affair, not mine. You'll astonish the natives, that's all.

A. It's great nonsense, you must allow.

B. I can't see why *it* is greater nonsense than any other pronoun.

A. [*In despair.*] Well, it's of no use, I see.

B. Excuse me: *it* is of the very greatest use. I don't know a part of speech more useful. *It* performs all the greatest offices of nature, and contains, in fact, the whole agency and mystery of the world. *It* rains. *It* is fine weather. *It* freezes. *It*

thaws. *It* (which is very odd) is one o'clock. "*It* has been a very frequent observation." *It* goes. Here *it* goes. How goes it?—(which, by the way, is a translation from the Latin, *Eo, is, it*; *Eo*, I go; *is*, thou goest; *it*, he or it goes. In short——

A. In short—if I wanted a dissertation on *it*, now's the time for it. But I don't; so, good-bye. [*Going.*]—I saw Miss M. last night.

B. The devil you did! Where was it?

A. [*To himself.*] Now I have him, and will revenge myself. Where *was* it? Where was *it*, eh? Oh, you must know a great deal more about *it* than I do.

B. Nay, my dear fellow, do tell me. I'm on thorns.

A. On thorns! Very odd thorns. I never saw an acanthus look so like a pavement.

B. Come now, to be serious.

A. [*Comes close to B., and looks tragic.*]

B. He, he! Very fair, egad. But do tell me now where was she? How did she look? Who was with her?

A. Oh, ho! *Hoo* was with her, was he? Well, I wanted to know his name. I couldn't tell who the devil it was. But I say, Jack, *who's* Hoo?

B. Good. He, he! Devilish fair! But now, my dear Will, for God's sake, you know how interested I am.

A. The deuce you are! I always took you for a disinterested fellow. I always said of Jack B., Jack's apt to overdo his credit for wit; but a more honest disinterested fellow I never met with.

B. Well, then, as you think so, be merciful. Where is Miss M.?

A. This is more astonishing news than any. *Ware* is Miss M. I know her passion for music; but this is wonderful. Good Heavens! To think of a delicate young lady dressing herself in man's clothes, and leading the band at a theatre under the name of Ware.

B. Now, my dear Will, consider. I acknowledge I have been tiresome; I confess it is a bad habit, this word-catching; but consider my love.

A. [*Falls into an attitude of musing.*]

B. Well.

A. Don't interrupt me. I am considering your love.

B. I repent; I am truly sorry. What shall I do? [*Laying his hand on his heart.*]—I'll give up this cursed habit.

A. You will?—upon honour?

B. Upon my honour.

A. On the spot?

B. Now, this instant. Now, and for ever.

A. Strip away, then.

B. Strip? for what?

A. You said you'd give up that cursed habit.

B. Now, my dear A., for the love of everything that is sacred; for the love of your *own* love——

A. Will you promise me sincerely?

B. Heart and soul.

A. Step over the way, then, into the coffee-house, and I'll tell you.

Street-sweeper. Plase your honour, pray remember the poor swape.

B. My friend, I'll never forget you, if that will be of any service. I'll think of you next year.

A. What again!

B. The last time, as I hope to be saved. Here, my friend; there's a shilling for you. Charity covers a multitude of bad jokes.

Street-sweeper. God send your honour thousands of them.

B. The jokes or the shillings, you rascal?

Street-sweeper. Och, the shillings. Divil a bit the bad jokes. I can make them myself, and a shilling's no joke anyhow.

A. What! really silent! and in spite of the dog's equivocal Irish face! Come, B., I now see you can give up a jest, and are really in love; and your mistress, I will undertake to say, will not be sorry to be convinced of both. Women like to begin with merriment well enough; but they prefer coming to a grave conclusion.

AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, WHAT IS POETRY?

Poetry, strictly and artistically so called, that is to say, considered not merely as poetic feeling, which is more or less shared by all the world, but as the operation of that feeling, such as we see it in the poet's book, is the utterance of a passion for truth, beauty, and power, embodying and illustrating its conceptions by imagination and fancy, and modulating its language on the principle of variety in uniformity. Its means are whatever the universe contains; and its ends, pleasure and exaltation.

Poetry stands between nature and convention, keeping alive among us the enjoyment of the external and the spiritual world: it has constituted the most enduring fame of nations; and, next to Love and Beauty, which are its parents, is the greatest proof to man of the pleasure to be found in all things, and of the probable riches of infinitude. . . .

Poetry is imaginative passion. The quickest and subtlest test of the possession of its essence is in expression; the variety of things to be expressed shows the amount of its resources; and the continuity of the song completes the evidence of its strength and greatness. He who has thought, feeling, expression, imagination, action, character, and continuity, all in the largest amount and highest degree, is the greatest poet. . . .

It is thus, by exquisite pertinence, melody, and the implied power of writing with exuberance, if need be, that beauty and truth become identical in poetry, and that pleasure, or at the very worst, a balm in our tears, is drawn out of pain. . . .

REASON IN POETRY

THE fact is, that Goldsmith thought he was reasoning finely, when he was writing fine poetry only. It is the fault of poetical argument that the reasoner is apt to forget his logic in his fancy; he catches at a brilliant line, or a brilliant idea; his imagination fires; and his reason, that serves merely to overshadow its brightness, rolls from it like smoke. It is well for the generality of readers that melancholy disquisitions in poetry have not the doleful effect of such disquisitions in prose. Poetry scatters so many flowers on the most rugged arguments that the weariness of the road is insensibly beguiled.

WIT AND HUMOUR

(DEFINED)

I CONFESS I felt this[1] so strongly when I began to reflect on the present subject, and found myself so perplexed with the demand, that I was forced to reject plan after plan, and feared I should never be able to give any tolerable account of the matter. I experienced no such difficulty with the concentrating seriousness

[1] That "levity has as many tricks as the kitten."

and sweet attraction of the subject of "Imagination and Fancy"; but this laughing jade of a topic, with her endless whims and faces, and the legions of indefinable shapes that she brought about me, seemed to do nothing but scatter my faculties, or bear them off deridingly into pastime. I felt as if I was undergoing a Saint Anthony's Temptation reversed,—a laughable instead of a frightful one. Thousands of merry devils poured in upon me from all sides,—doubles of Similes, buffooneries of Burlesques, stalkings of Mock-heroics, stings in the tails of Epigrams, glances of Innuendos, dry looks of Ironies, corpulences of Exaggerations, ticklings of mad Fancies, claps on the back of Horse-plays, complacencies of *Unawarenesses*, flounderings of Absurdities, irresistibilities of Iterations, significancies of Jargons, wailings of Pretended Woes, roarings of Laughters, and hubbubs of Animal Spirits;—all so general yet particular, so demanding distinct recognition, and yet so baffling the attempt with their numbers and their confusion, that a thousand masquerades in one would have seemed to threaten less torment to the pen of a reporter.

. . . . . .

[It is not to be supposed] that everything witty or humorous excites laughter. It may be accompanied with a sense of too many other things to do so; with too much thought, with too great a perfection even, or with pathos and sorrow. All extremes meet; excess of laughter itself runs into tears, and mirth becomes heaviness. Mirth itself is too often but melancholy in disguise. The jests of the fool in *Lear* are the sighs of knowledge. But as far as Wit and Humour affect us on their own accounts, or unmodified by graver considerations, laughter is their usual result and happy ratification. . . .

Wit is the clash and reconcilement of incongruities; the meeting of extremes round a corner; the flashing of an artificial light from one object to another, disclosing some unexpected resemblance or connection. It is the detection of likeness in unlikeness, of sympathy in antipathy, or of the extreme points of antipathies themselves, made friends by the very merriment of their introduction. The mode, or form, is comparatively of no consequence, provided it give no trouble to the apprehension and you may bring as many ideas together as can pleasantly assemble. But a single one is nothing. Two ideas are as necessary to Wit, as couples are to marriages; and the union is happy in proportion to the agreeableness of the offspring. . .

Humour, considered as the object treated of by the humorous writer, and not as the power of treating it, derives its name from the prevailing quality of *moisture* in the bodily temperament; and is *a tendency of the mind to run in particular directions of thought or feeling more amusing than accountable*; at least in the opinion of society. It is, therefore, either in reality or appearance, a thing inconsistent. It deals in incongruities of character and circumstance, as Wit does in those of arbitrary ideas. The more the incongruities the better, provided they are all in nature; but two, at any rate, are as necessary to Humour, as the two ideas are to Wit; and the more strikingly they differ yet harmonise, the more amusing the result. Such is the melting together of the propensities to love and war in the person of exquisite Uncle Toby; of the gullible and the manly in Parson Adams; of the professional and the individual, or the accidental and the permanent, in the Canterbury Pilgrims; of the objectionable and the agreeable, the fat and the sharp-witted, in Falstaff; of honesty and knavery in Gil Blas; of pretension and non-performance in the Bullies of the dramatic poets; of folly and wisdom in Don Quixote; of shrewdness and doltishness in Sancho Panza; and, it may be added, in the discordant yet harmonious co-operation of Don Quixote and his attendant, considered as a pair. . . .

SHAKESPEARE

[BORN 1564—DIED 1616]

SHAKESPEARE had as great a comic genius as tragic; and everybody would think so, were it possible for comedy to impress the mind as tragedy does. It is true, the times he lived in, as Hazlitt has remarked, were not so foppish and ridiculous as those of our prose comic dramatists, and therefore he had not so much to laugh at: and it is observed by the same critic, with equal truth, that his genius was of too large and magnanimous a description to delight in satire. But who doubts that had Shakespeare lived in those inferior times, the author of the character of Mercutio could have written that of Dorimant? of Benedick and Beatrice, the dialogues of Congreve? or of *Twelfth Night* and the *Taming of the Shrew*, the most uproarious farce? I certainly cannot think with Dr. Johnson that he wrote

comedy better than tragedy; that "his tragedy seems to be skill, and his comedy instinct." I could as soon believe that the instinct of Nature was confined to laughter, and that her tears were shed upon principles of criticism. Such may have been the Doctor's recipe for writing tragedy; but *Irene* is not *King Lear*. Laughter and tears are alike born with us, and so was the power of exciting them with Shakespeare; because it pleased Nature to make him a complete human being.

Shakespeare had wit and humour in perfection; and like every possessor of powers so happy, he rioted in their enjoyment. Molière was not fonder of running down a joke: Rabelais could not give loose to a more "admirable fooling." His mirth is commensurate with his melancholy; it is founded on the same knowledge and feeling, and it furnished him with a set-off to their oppression. When he had been too thoughtful with Hamlet, he "took it out" with Falstaff and Sir Toby. Not that he was habitually melancholy. He had too healthy a brain for that, and too great animal spirits; but in running the whole circle of thought, he must of necessity have gone through its darkest as well as brightest phases; and the sunshine was welcome in proportion. Shakespeare is the inventor of the phrase, "setting the table in a roar"; of the memory of Yorick; of the stomach of Falstaff, stuffed as full of wit as of sack. He "wakes the night-owl with a catch"; draws "three souls out of one weaver"; passes the "equinoctial of Queubus" (some glorious torrid zone, lying beyond three o'clock in the morning); and reminds the "unco righteous" for ever, that virtue, false or true, is not incompatible with the recreations of "cakes and ale." Shakespeare is said to have died of getting out of a sick-bed to entertain his friends Drayton and Ben Jonson, visitors from London. He might have died a later and a graver death, but he could not well have had one more genial, and therefore more poetical. Far was it from dishonouring the eulogiser of "good men's feasts"; the recorder of the noble friends Antonio and Bassanio; the great thorough-going humanist, who did equal justice to the gravest and the gayest moments of life.

It is a remarkable proof of the geniality of Shakespeare's jesting, that even its abundance of ideas does not spoil it; for, in comedy as well as tragedy, he is the most reflective of writers. I know but of one that comes near him in this respect; and very near him (I dare to affirm) he does come, though he has none of his poetry, properly so called. It is Sterne; in whose *Tristram Shandy* there is not a word without meaning—often of the

profoundest as well as kindliest sort. The professed fools of Shakespeare are among the wisest of men. They talk Æsop and Solomon in every jest. Yet they amuse as much as they instruct us. The braggart Parolles, whose name signifies *words*, as though he spoke nothing else, scarcely utters a sentence that is not rich with ideas; yet his weakness and self-committals hang over them all like a sneaking infection, and hinder our laughter from becoming respectful. The scene in which he is taken blindfold among his old acquaintances, and so led to vilify their characters, under the impression that he is gratifying their enemies, is almost as good as the screen-scene in the *School for Scandal*.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER

[BEAUMONT, 1585–1613. FLETCHER, 1579–1625]

SINCE expressing, in the above volume,[1] the surprise which everybody feels at the astounding mixture of license and refinement displayed by these poets (for the grossness of earlier writers is but a simplicity compared with it), I have come to the conclusion that it was an excess of animal spirits, encouraged by the demand of the times, and the intoxication of applause. They were the sons of men of rank: they had been thrown upon the town in the hey-day of their blood, probably with a turn for lavish expenditure; they certainly wanted money as they advanced, and were glad to get it of gross audiences; they had been taught to confound loyalty with servility, which subjected them to the dissolute influence of the court of James the First; they came among the actors and the playwrights, with advantages of position, perhaps of education and accomplishments, superior to them all: their confidence, their wit, their enjoyment was unbounded; everybody was glad to hear what the gay gentlemen had to say; and forth they poured it accordingly, without stint or conscience. Beaumont died young; but Fletcher, who went writing on, appears to have taken a still greater licence than his friend. The son of the bishop had probably been tempted to go farther out of bounds than the son of the judge; for Dr. Fletcher was not such a bishop as Grindall or Jewel. The poet might have been taught hypocrisy

[1] *Wit and Humour.*

by his father; and, in despising it as he grew up, had gone to another extreme.

The reader of [these plays] will observe the difference between the fierce weight of the satire of *Volpone*, in which poison and suffocation are brought in to aggravate, and the gayer caricature of Beaumont and Fletcher. It is equally founded on truth—equally wilful and superabundant in the treatment of it, but more light and happy. You feel that the writers enjoyed it with a gayer laugh. The pretended self-deception with which a coward lies to his own thoughts—the necessity for support which induces him to apply to others as cowardly as himself for the warrant of their good opinion, and the fascinations of vanity which impels such men into the exposure which they fancy they have taken the subtlest steps to guard against—are most entertainingly set forth in the interview of Bessus with the two bullies, and the subsequent catastrophe of all three in the hands of Bacurius. The nice balance of distinction and difference in which the bullies pretend to weigh the merits of kicks and beatings, and the impossibility which they affect of a shadow of imputation against their valours, or even of the power to assume it hypothetically, are masterly plays of wit of the first order.

WORDSWORTH

[BORN 1770—DIED 1850]

THE author does not scruple to confess, that his admiration of him [Wordsworth] has become greater and greater between every publication of *The Feast of the Poets*. He has become a convert, not indeed to what he still considers as his faults, but, to use a favourite phrase of these times, to the "immense majority" of his beauties;—and here, it seems to him, lies the great mistake, which certain intelligent critics persist in sharing with others of a very different description. It is to be observed by the way, that the defects of Mr. Wordsworth are the result of theory, not incapacity; and it is with their particular effect on those most calculated to understand him that we quarrel, rather than with anything else. But taking him as a mere author to be criticised, the writers in question seem to regard him as a stringer of puerilities, who has so many faults that

you can only wonder now and then at his beauties; whereas the proper idea of him is that of a noble poet, who has so many beauties that you are only apt now and then, perhaps with no great wisdom, to grow impatient at his faults.

COLERIDGE

[BORN 1773—DIED 1834]

COLERIDGE lived in the most extraordinary and agitated period of modern history; and to a certain extent he was so mixed up with its controversies, that he was at one time taken for nothing but an apostate republican, and at another for a dreaming theosophist. The truth is, that both his politics and theosophy were at the mercy of a discursive genius, intellectually bold but educationally timid, which, anxious, or rather willing, to bring conviction and speculation together, mooting all points as it went, and throwing the subtlest glancing lights on many, ended in satisfying nobody, and concluding nothing. Charles Lamb said of him, that he had "the art of making the unintelligible appear intelligible." He was the finest dreamer, the most eloquent talker, and the most original thinker of his day; but for want of complexional energy, did nothing with all the vast *prose* part of his mind but help the Germans to give a subtler tone to criticism, and sow a few valuable seeds of thought in minds worthy to receive them. Nine-tenths of his theology would apply equally well to their own creeds in the mouths of a Brahmin or a Mussulman.

His poetry is another matter. It is so beautiful, and was so quietly content with its beauty, making no call on the critics, and receiving hardly any notice, that people are but now beginning to awake to a full sense of its merits. Of pure poetry, strictly so called, that is to say, consisting of nothing but its essential self, without conventional and perishing helps, he was the greatest master of his time. If you could see it in a phial, like a distillation of roses (taking it, I mean, at its best), it would be found without a speck. The poet is happy with so good a gift, and the reader is "happy in his happiness." Yet so little, sometimes, are a man's contemporaries and personal acquaintances able or disposed to estimate him properly, that while Coleridge, unlike Shakespeare, lavished praises on his

poetic friends, he had all the merit of the generosity to himself; and even Hazlitt, owing perhaps to causes of political alienation, could see nothing to admire in the exquisite poem of *Christabel*, but the description of the quarrel between the friends! After speaking, too, of the *Ancient Mariner* as the only one of his poems that he could point out to anyone as giving an adequate idea of his great natural powers, he adds, "It is High German, however, and in it he seems to conceive of poetry but as a drunken dream, reckless, careless, and heedless of past, present, and to come." This is said of a poem, with which fault has been found for the exceeding conscientiousness of its moral! O ye critics, the best of ye, what havoc does personal difference play with your judgments! It was not Mr. Hazlitt's only or most unwarrantable censure, or one which friendship found hardest to forgive. But peace, and honour too, be with his memory! If he was a splenetic and sometimes jealous man, he was a disinterested politician and an admirable critic: and lucky were those whose natures gave them the right and the power to pardon him.

Coleridge, though a born poet, was in his style and general musical feeling the disciple partly of Spenser, and partly of the fine old English ballad-writers in the collection of Bishop Percy. But if he could not improve on them in some things, how he did in others, especially in the art of being thoroughly musical! Of all our writers of the briefer narrative poetry, Coleridge is the finest since Chaucer; and assuredly he is the sweetest of all our poets. Waller's music is but a court-flourish in comparison; and though Beaumont and Fletcher, Collins, Gray, Keats, Shelley, and others, have several as sweet passages, and Spenser is in a certain sense musical throughout, yet no man has written whole poems, of equal length, so perfect in the sentiment of music, so varied with it, and yet leaving on the ear so unbroken and single an effect.

> A *damsel with a dulcimer*
> *In a vision once I saw;*
> *It was an Abyssinian maid,*
> *And on her dulcimer she play'd,*
> *Singing of Mount Abora.*

That is but one note of a music ever sweet, yet never cloying. . . .

We see how such a poet obtains his music. Such forms of melody can proceed only from the most beautiful inner spirit of sympathy and imagination. He sympathises, in his

universality, with antipathy itself. If Regan or Goneril had been a young and handsome witch of the times of chivalry, and attuned her violence to craft, or betrayed it in venomous looks, she could not have beaten the soft-voiced, appalling spells, or sudden, snake-eyed glances of the Lady Geraldine,—looks which the innocent Christabel, in her fascination, feels compelled to "imitate." . . .

Oh! it is too late now; and habit and self-love blinded me at the time, and I did not know (much as I admired him) how great a poet lived in that grove at Highgate; or I would have cultivated its walks more, as I might have done, and endeavoured to return him, with my gratitude, a small portion of the delight his verses have given me.

I must add, that I do not think Coleridge's earlier poems at all equal to the rest. Many, indeed, I do not care to read a second time; but there are some ten or a dozen, of which I never tire, and which will one day make a small and precious volume to put in the pockets of all enthusiasts in poetry, and endure with the language. Five of these are *The Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, *Kubla Khan*, *Genevieve*, and *Youth and Age*. Some, that more personally relate to the poet, will be added for the love of him, not omitting the *Visit of the Gods*, from Schiller, and the famous passage on the Heathen Mythology, also from Schiller. A short life, a portrait, and some other engravings perhaps, will complete the book, after the good old fashion of Cooke's and Bell's editions of the Poets; and then, like the contents of the Jew of Malta's casket, there will be

Infinite riches in a little room.

SHELLEY[1]

[BORN 1792—DIED 1822]

MR. SHELLEY'S writings have since aided the general progress of knowledge in bringing about a wiser period; and an effusion, which would have got him cruelly misrepresented a few years back, will now do unequivocal honour to his memory, and show everybody what a most considerate and kind, as well as fervent heart, the cause of the world has lost.

The poem, though written purposely in a lax and familiar

[1] Preface to *The Masque of Anarchy*.

measure, is highly characteristical of the author. It has the usual ardour of his tone, the unbounded sensibility by which he combines the most domestic with the most remote and fanciful images, and the patience, so beautifully checking, and in fact produced by the extreme impatience of his moral feeling. His patience is the deposit of many impatiences, acting upon an equal measure of understanding and moral taste. His wisdom is the wisdom of a heart overcharged with sensibility, acquiring the profoundest notions of justice from the completest sympathy, and at once taking refuge from its pain, and working out its extremest purposes, in the adoption of a stubborn and loving fortitude which neutralises resistance. His very strokes of humour, while they startle with their extravagance and even ghastliness, cut to the heart with pathos. The fourth and fifth stanzas, for instance, of this poem, involve an allusion which becomes affecting from our knowing what he must have felt when he wrote it. It is to his children, who were taken from him by the late Lord Chancellor, under that preposterous law by which every succeeding age might be made to blush for the tortures inflicted on the opinions of its predecessor.

"Anarchy the skeleton," riding through the streets, and grinning and bowing on each side of him,

> As well as if his education
> Had cost ten millions to the nation,

is another instance of the union of ludicrousness with terror. Hope, looking "more like Despair," and laying herself down before his horse's feet to die, is a touching image. The description of the rise and growth of Public Enlightenment,

> —upborne on wings whose grain
> Was as the light of sunny rain,

and producing "thoughts" as he went,

> As stars from Night's loose hair are shaken,

till on a sudden the prostrate multitude look up,

> and ankle-deep in blood,
> Hope, that maiden most serene,
> Was walking with a quiet mien,

is rich with the author's usual treasure of imagery and splendid words. The sixty-third is a delicious stanza, producing a most happy and comforting picture in the midst of visions of blood and tumult. We see the light from its cottage window. The substantial blessings of Freedom are nobly described; and,

lastly, the advice given by the poet, the great national measure recommended by him, is singularly striking as a *political anticipation*. It advises what has since taken place, and what was felt by the grown wisdom of the age to be the only thing which *could* take place, with effect, as a final rebuke and nullification of the Tories; to wit, a calm, lawful, and inflexible preparation for resistance in the shape of a protesting multitude—the few against the many—the laborious and suffering against the spoilt children of monopoly—Mankind against Tory-kind. It is true the poet recommends there should be no active resistance, come what might; which is a piece of fortitude, however effective, which we believe was not contemplated by the political unions: yet, in point of the spirit of the thing, the success he anticipates has actually occurred, and after his very fashion; for there really has been no resistance, except by multitudinous protest. The Tories, however desirous they showed themselves to draw their swords, did not draw them. The battle was won without a blow.

Mr. Shelley's countrymen know how anxious he was for the advancement of the coming good, but they have yet to become acquainted with his anxiety in behalf of this particular means of it—Reform. The first time I heard from him was upon the subject; it was before I knew him, and while he was a student at Oxford, in the year 1811. So early did he begin his career of philanthropy! Mankind, and their interests, were scarcely ever out of his thoughts. It was a moot point, when he entered your room, whether he would begin with some half-pleasant, half-pensive joke, or quote something Greek, or ask some question about public affairs. I remember his coming upon me when I had not seen him for a long time, and after grappling my hands with both his, in his usual fervent manner, sitting down and looking at me very earnestly, with a deep though not melancholy interest in his face. We were sitting in a cottage study, with our knees to the fire, to which we had been getting nearer and nearer in the comfort of finding ourselves together; the pleasure of seeing him was my only feeling at the moment; and the air of domesticity about us was so complete, that I thought he was going to speak of some family matter—either his or my own; when he asked me, at the close of an intensity of pause, what was "the amount of the National Debt."

I used to rally him on the apparent inconsequentiality of his manner upon these occasions; and he was always ready to carry on the joke, because he said that my laughter did not hinder me from being in earnest. With deepest love and admiration

was my laughter mixed, or I should not have ventured upon paying him the compliment of it.

I have now before me his corrected proof of an anonymous pamphlet which he wrote in the year 1817, entitled *A Proposal for Putting Reform to the Vote through the Country*, . . . [which shows] how zealous he was on the subject; how generous in the example which he offered to set in behalf of Reform; and how judicious as well as fervent this most calumniated and noble spirit could be in recommending the most avowed of his opinions. The title-page of the proof is scrawled over with sketches of trees and foliage, which was a habit of his in the intervals of thinking, whenever he had pen or pencil in hand. He would indulge in it while waiting for you at an inn, or in a doorway, scratching his elms and oak-trees on the walls. He did them very spiritedly, and with what the painters call a gusto, particularly in point of grace. If he had room, he would add a cottage and a piece of water, with a sailing boat mooring among the trees. This was his *beau idéal* of a life, the repose of which was to be earned by zeal for his species, and warranted by the common good. What else the image of a boat brings to the memory of those who have lost him, I will not say, especially as he is still with us in his writings. But it is worth observing how agreeably this habit of sketching trees and bowers evinced the gentleness of my friend's nature, the longing he had for rest, and the smallness of his personal desires.

It has been hastily implied in a late notice of him, in a periodical work, that he was an aristocrat by disposition as well as birth; a conclusion natural enough even with intelligent men, who have been bred among aristocratical influences; but it is a pity that such men should give it as their opinion, because it tends to confirm inferior understandings in a similar delusion, and to make the vulgarity of would-be refinement still more confident in its assumptions. It is acknowledged on all hands, that Mr. Shelley's mind was not one to be measured by common rules,—not even by such as the vulgar, great and small, take for uncommon ones, or for cunning pieces of corporate knowledge snugly kept between one another. If there is anything which I can affirm of my beloved friend, with as much confidence as the fact of his being benevolent *and* a friend, it is that he was totally free from mistakes of this kind; that he never for one moment confounded the claims of real and essential, with those of conventional refinement; or allowed one to be substituted for the other in his mind by any compromise of his self-love.

I will admit it to be *possible*, that there were moments in which he might have been deceived in his estimation of people's manners, in consequence of those to which he had been early accustomed; but the charge implied against him involves a conscious or at least an habitual preference of what are called high-bred manners, for their own sakes, apart from the natures of those who exhibited them, and to the disadvantage of those to whom they had not been taught. I can affirm that it is a total mistake, and that he partook of no such weakness. I have seen him indeed draw himself up with a sort of irrepressible air of dignified objection, when moral vulgarity was betrayed in his presence, whatever might have been the rank of the betrayer; but nobody could hail with greater joy and simplicity, or meet upon more equal grounds, the instinct of a real delicacy and good intention, come in what shape it might. Why should he have done otherwise? He was Shelley; and not merely a man of that name. What had ordinary high life, and its pretensions, and the getting together of a few people for the sake of giving themselves a little importance, to do with his universal affinities? It was finely said one day in my hearing by Mr. Hazlitt, when asked why he could not temporise a little now and then, or make a compromise with an untruth, that it was "not worth his while." It was not worth Mr. Shelley's while to be an aristocrat. His spirit was large enough to take ten aristocracies into the hollow of his hand, and look at them as I have seen him look at insects from a tree, certainly with no thought of superiority or the reverse, but with a curious interest.

The quintessence of gentlemanly demeanour which was observable in Mr. Shelley, in drawing-rooms, when he was not over-thoughtful, was nothing but an exquisite combination of sense, moral grace, and habitual sympathy. It was more dignified than what is called dignity in others, because it was the heart of the thing itself, or intrinsic worth, graced by the sincerest idealism; and not a response made by imputed merit to the homage of the imputors. The best conventional dignity could have no more come up to it than the trick of an occasion to the truth of a life.

But if an aristocracy of intellect and morals were required, he was the man for one of their leaders. High and princely was the example he could set to an aristocracy of a different sort, as the reader [may] see . . . from his pamphlet. The late death of an extraordinary man of genius, the delight of nations, and the special glory of his country, has just shown the blushing

world what little things could be done for him, dead or alive, by the "great men" whom he condescended to glorify. The manager of a Scottish theatre (to his immortal credit) has contributed, in furtherance of the erection of a monument to him, precisely the same sum as was drawn forth out of the money bags of a Scottish duke in the receipt of nearly a thousand pounds a day. . . . The delight of talking about my friend has led me into a longer preface than I intended to write. I did not think of detaining the reader so long from his poem: most probably, indeed, I have not detained him. . . . [I shall not] stop to inquire how far Mr. Shelley would have thought the feasibilities of improvement hastened by the events that have taken place of late years—events, one of them in particular (the Glorious Three Days), which it would have repaid him for all his endurances had he lived to see.

And who shall say that he has not seen them? For if ever there was a man upon earth, of a more spiritual nature than ordinary, partaking of the errors and perturbations of his species, but seeing and working through them with a seraphical purpose of good, such an one was Percy Bysshe Shelley.

BURNS

[BORN 1759—DIED 1796]

He [Burns] was pastoral poetry itself, in the shape of an actual, glorious peasant, vigorous as if Homer had written him, and tender as generous strength or as memories of the grave. Ramsay . . . is but a small part of Burns—is but a field in a corner compared with the whole Scots pastoral region. He has none of Burns's pathos; none of his grandeur; none of his burning energy; none of his craving after universal good. How universal is Burns! What mirth in his cups! What softness in his tears! What sympathy in his very satire! What manhood in everything! If Theocritus, the inventor of a loving and affecting Polyphemus, could have foreseen the verses on the mouse and the daisy turned up with the plough, the "Tam o' Shanter," "O Willie brew'd a peck o' maut," "Ye Banks and Braes o' bonnie Doon," etc. (not to mention a hundred others, which have less to do with our subject), tears of admiration would have rushed into his eyes.

CHARLES LAMB

[BORN 1775—DIED 1834]

CHARLES LAMB has a head worthy of Aristotle, with as fine a heart as ever beat in human bosom, and limbs very fragile to sustain it. There was a caricature of him sold in the shops, which pretended to be a likeness. P[rocte]r went into the shop in a passion, and asked the man what he meant by putting forth such a libel. The man apologised, and said that the artist meant no offence. Mr. Lamb's features are strongly yet delicately cut: he has a fine eye as well as forehead; and no face carries in it greater marks of thought and feeling. It resembles that of Bacon, with less worldly vigour and more sensibility.

As his frame, so is his genius. It is as fit for thought as can be, and equally as unfit for action; and this renders him melancholy, apprehensive, humorous, and willing to make the best of everything as it is, both from tenderness of heart and abhorrence of alteration. His understanding is too great to admit an absurdity; his frame is not strong enough to deliver it from a fear. His sensibility to strong contrasts is the foundation of his humour, which is that of a wit at once melancholy and willing to be pleased. He will beard a superstition, and shudder at the old phantasm while he does it. One could imagine him cracking a jest in the teeth of a ghost, and then melting into thin air himself, out of sympathy with the awful. His humour and his knowledge both, are those of Hamlet, of Molière, of Carlin, who shook a city with laughter, and, in order to divert his melancholy, was recommended to go and hear himself. Yet he extracts a real pleasure out of his jokes, because good-heartedness retains that privilege, when it fails in everything else. I should say he condescended to be a punster, if condescension were a word befitting wisdom like his. Being told that somebody had lampooned him, he said, "Very well, I'll Lamb-pun him." His puns are admirable, and often contain as deep things as the wisdom of some who have greater names. Such a man, for instance, as Nicole, the Frenchman, was a baby to him. He would have cracked a score of jokes at him, worth his whole book of sentences; pelted his head with pearls. Nicole would not have understood him, but Rochefoucault would, and Pascal too; and some of our old Englishmen would have understood him still better. He would have been worthy of hearing Shakespeare read one of his scenes to him, hot from the brain.

Commonplace finds a great comforter in him, as long as it is good-natured; it is to the ill-natured or the dictatorial only that he is startling. Willing to see society go on as it does, because he despairs of seeing it otherwise, but not at all agreeing in his interior with the common notions of crime and punishment, he "*dumbfounded*" a long tirade one evening, by taking the pipe out of his mouth, and asking the speaker, "Whether he meant to say that a thief was not a good man?" To a person abusing Voltaire, and indiscreetly opposing his character to that of Jesus Christ, he said admirably well (though he by no means overrates Voltaire, nor wants reverence in the other quarter), that "Voltaire was a very good Jesus Christ *for the French*." He likes to see the church-goers continue to go to church, and has written a tale in his sister's admirable little book (*Mrs. Leicester's School*) to encourage the rising generation to do so; but to a conscientious deist he has nothing to object; and if an atheist found every other door shut against him, he would assuredly not find his. I believe he would have the world remain precisely as it is, provided it innovated no farther; but this spirit in him is anything but a worldly one, or for his own interest. He hardly contemplates with patience the fine new buildings in the Regent's Park: and, privately speaking, he has a grudge against *official* heaven-expounders, or clergymen. He would rather, however, be with a crowd that he disliked, than feel himself alone. He said to me one day, with a face of great solemnity, "What must have been that man's feelings, who thought himself *the first deist*?" Finding no footing in certainty, he delights to confound the borders of theoretical truth and falsehood. He is fond of telling wild stories to children, engrafted on things about them; writes letters to people abroad, telling them that a friend of theirs [Mr. Alsager, the commercial editor of *The Times*] has come out in genteel comedy; and persuaded G[eorge] D[yer] that Lord Castlereagh was the author of *Waverley*! The same excellent person walking one evening out of his friend's house into the New River, Mr. Lamb (who was from home at the time) wrote a paper under his signature of Elia (now no longer anonymous), stating, that common friends would have stood dallying on the bank, have sent for neighbours, etc., but that *he*, in his magnanimity, jumped in, and rescued his friend after the old noble fashion. He wrote in the same magazine two lives of Liston and Munden, which the public took for serious, and which exhibit an extraordinary jumble of imaginary facts and truth of bye-painting. Munden

he made born at "Stoke Pogis": the very sound of which is like the actor speaking and digging his words. He knows how many false conclusions and pretensions are made by men who profess to be guided by facts only, as if facts could not be misconceived, or figments taken for them; and therefore, one day, when somebody was speaking of a person who valued himself on being a matter-of-fact man, "Now," said he, "I value myself on being a matter-of-lie man." This does not hinder his being a man of the greatest veracity, in the ordinary sense of the word; but "truth," he says, "is precious, and ought not to be wasted on everybody." Those who wish to have a genuine taste of him, and an insight into his modes of life, should read his essays on Hogarth and *King Lear*, [his *Letters*,] his article on the *London Streets*, on *Whist-Playing*, which he loves, and on *Saying Grace before Meat*, which he thinks a strange moment to *select* for being grateful. He said once to a brother whist-player, whose hand was more clever than clean, and who had enough in him to afford the joke, "M., if dirt were trumps, what hands you would hold!"

JOHN BUNCLE

The Life of John Buncle, Esq.; containing various Observations and Reflections made in several parts of the World, and many Extraordinary Relations, is a book unlike any other in the language, perhaps in the world; . . . John's *Life* is not a classic: it contains no passage which is a general favourite: no extract could be made from it of any length, to which readers of good taste would not find objections. Yet there is so curious an interest in all its absurdities; its jumble of the gayest and gravest considerations is so founded in the actual state of things; it draws now and then such excellent portraits from life; and above all, its animal spirits are at once so excessive and so real, that we defy the best readers not to be entertained with it, and having had one or two specimens, not to desire more. Buncle would say, that there is "cut and come again" in him, like one of his luncheons of cold beef and a foaming tankard. . . . John is a kind of innocent Henry the Eighth of private life, without the other's fat, fury, and solemnity. He is a prodigious hand at matrimony, at divinity, at a song, at a loud "hem," and at

turkey and chine. He breaks with the Trinitarians as confidently and with as much scorn as Henry did with the Pope; and he marries seven wives, whom he disposes of by the lawful process of fever and small-pox. His book is made up of history, mathematics (literally), songs, polemics, landscapes, eating and drinking, and characters of singular men, all bound together by his introductions to and marriages with these seven successive ladies, every one of whom is a charmer, a Unitarian, and cut off in the flower of her youth. Buncle does not know how to endure her loss; he shuts his eyes "for three days"; is stupefied; is in despair; till suddenly he recollects that Heaven does not like such conduct; that it is a mourner's business to bow to its decrees; to be devout; to be philosophic; in short, to be jolly, and look out for another dear, bewitching partner "on Christian principles." . . . [Most of his ladies] are discovered in lovely places reading books, and are always prepared for nice little suppers. . . .

It is impossible to be serious with John Buncle, Esquire, jolly dog, Unitarian, and Blue Beard; otherwise, if we were to take him at his word, we should pronounce him, besides being a jolly dog, to be one of a very selfish description, with too good a constitution to correct him, a prodigious vanity, no feeling whatever, and a provoking contempt for everything unfortunate, or opposed to his whims. He quarrels with bigotry, and is a bigot; with abuse, and riots in it. He hates the cruel opinions held by Athanasius, and sends people to the devil as an Arian. He kills off seven wives out of pure incontinence and love of change, yet cannot abide a rake or even the poorest victim of the rake, unless both happen to be his acquaintances. The way in which he tramples on the miserable wretches in the streets, is the very rage and triumph of hard-heartedness, furious at seeing its own vices reflected on it, unredeemed by the privileges of law, divinity, and success. But the truth is, John is no more responsible for his opinions than health itself, or a high-mettled racer. He only "thinks he's thinking." He does, in reality, nothing at all but eat, drink, talk, and enjoy himself. Amory, Buncle's creator, was in all probability an honest man, or he would hardly have been innocent enough to put such extravagance on paper. What Mrs. Amory thought of the seven wives does not appear. Probably he invented them before he knew her; perhaps was not anxious to be reminded of them afterwards. When he was in the zenith of his health and spirits, he must have been a prodigious fellow over a bottle and beefsteak.

MY BOOKS

SITTING, last winter, among my books, and walled round with all the comfort and protection which they and my fireside could afford me; to wit, a table of high-piled books at my back, my writing-desk on one side of me, some shelves on the other, and the feeling of the warm fire at my feet; I began to consider how I loved the authors of those books: how I loved them, too, not only for the imaginative pleasures they afforded me, but for their making me love the very books themselves, and delight to be in contact with them. I looked sideways at my Spenser, my Theocritus, and my *Arabian Nights*; then above them at my Italian poets; then behind me at my Dryden and Pope, my romances, and my Boccaccio; then on my left side at my Chaucer, who lay on a writing-desk; and thought how natural it was in C[harles] L[amb] to give a kiss to an old folio, as I once saw him do to Chapman's *Homer*. At the same time I wondered how he could sit in that front room of his with nothing but a few unfeeling tables and chairs, or at best a few engravings in trim frames, instead of putting a couple of arm-chairs into the back-room with the books in it, where there is but one window. Would I were there, with both the chairs properly filled, and one or two more besides! "We had talk, Sir,"—the only talk capable of making one forget the books.

Good God! I could cry like one of the Children in the Wood to think how far I and mine are from home; but this would not be "decent or manly"; so I smile instead, and am philosophical enough to make your heart ache. Besides, I shall love the country I am in more and more, and on the very account for which it angers me at present.

This is confessing great pain in the midst of my books. I own it; and yet I feel all the pleasure in them which I have expressed.

> Take me, my book-shelves, to your arms,
> And shield me from the ills of life.

No disparagement to the arms of Stella; but in neither case is pain a reason why we should not have a high enjoyment of the pleasure.

I entrench myself in my books equally against sorrow and the weather. If the wind comes through a passage, I look about to see how I can fence it off by a better disposition of my movables; if a melancholy thought is importunate, I give another glance

at my Spenser. When I speak of being in contact with my books, I mean it literally. I like to lean my head against them. Living in a southern climate, though in a part sufficiently northern to feel the winter, I was obliged, during that season, to take some of the books out of the study, and hang them up near the fireplace in the sitting-room, which is the only room that has such a convenience. I therefore walled myself in, as well as I could, in the manner above-mentioned. I took a walk every day, to the astonishment of the Genoese, who used to huddle against a bit of sunny wall, like flies on a chimney-piece; but I did this only that I might so much the more enjoy my *English* evening. The fire was a wood fire instead of a coal; but I imagined myself in the country. I remembered at the very worst, that one end of my native land was not nearer the other than England is to Italy.

While writing this article I am in my study again. Like the rooms in all houses in this country which are not hovels, it is handsome and ornamented. On one side it looks towards a garden and the mountains; on another, to the mountains and the sea. What signifies all this? I turn my back upon the sea; I shut up even one of the side windows looking upon the mountains, and retain no prospect but that of the trees. On the right and left of me are book-shelves; a bookcase is affectionately open in front of me; and thus kindly enclosed with my books and the green leaves, I write. If all this is too luxurious and effeminate, of all luxuries it is the one that leaves you the most strength. And this is to be said for scholarship in general. It unfits a man for activity, for his bodily part in the world; but it often doubles both the power and the sense of his mental duties; and with much indignation against his body, and more against those who tyrannise over the intellectual claims of mankind, the man of letters, like the magician of old, is prepared "to play the devil" with the great men of this world, in a style that astonishes both the sword and the toga.

I do not like this fine large study. I like elegance. I like room to breathe in, and even walk about, when I want to breathe and walk about. I like a great library next my study; but for the study itself, give me a small snug place, almost entirely walled with books. There should be only one window in it, looking upon trees. Some prefer a place with few, or no books at all—nothing but a chair or a table, like Epictetus; but I should say that these were philosophers, not lovers of books, if I did not recollect that Montaigne was both. He had a study

in a round tower, walled as aforesaid. It is true, one forgets one's books while writing—at least they say so. For my part, I think I have them in a sort of sidelong mind's eye; like a second thought, which is none—like a waterfall, or a whispering wind.

I dislike a grand library to study in. I mean an immense apartment, with books all in Museum order, especially wire-safed. I say nothing against the Museum itself, or public libraries. They are capital places to go to, but not to sit in; and talking of this, I hate to read in public, and in strange company. The jealous silence; the dissatisfied looks of the messengers; the inability to help yourself; the not knowing whether you really ought to trouble the messengers, much less the gentleman in black, or brown, who is, perhaps, half a trustee; with a variety of other jarrings between privacy and publicity, prevent one's settling heartily to work. They say "they manage these things better in France"; and I dare say they do; but I think I should feel still more *distrait* in France, in spite of the benevolence of the servitors, and the generous profusion of pen, ink, and paper. I should feel as if I were doing nothing but interchanging amenities with polite writers.

A grand private library, which the master of the house also makes his study, never looks to me like a real place of books, much less of authorship. I cannot take kindly to it. It is certainly not out of envy; for three parts of the books are generally trash, and I can seldom think of the rest and the proprietor together. It reminds me of a fine gentleman, of a collector, of a patron, of Gil Blas and the Marquis of Marialva; of anything but genius and comfort. I have a particular hatred of a round table (not *the* Round Table, for that was a dining one) covered and irradiated with books, and never met with one in the house of a clever man but once. It is the reverse of Montaigne's Round Tower. Instead of bringing the books around you, they all seem turning another way, and eluding your hands.

Conscious of my propriety and comfort in these matters, I take an interest in the bookcases as well as the books of my friends. I long to meddle, and dispose them after my own notions. When they see this confession, they will acknowledge the virtue I have practised. I believe I did mention his book-room to C. L., and I think he told me that he often sat there when alone. It would be hard not to believe him. His library, though not abounding in Greek or Latin (which are the only

things to help some persons to an idea of literature), is anything but superficial. The depths of philosophy and poetry are there, the innermost passages of the human heart. It has some Latin too. It has also a handsome contempt for appearance. It looks like what it is, a selection made at precious intervals from the bookstalls;—now a Chaucer at nine and twopence; now a Montaigne or a Sir Thomas Browne at two shillings; now a Jeremy Taylor; a Spinoza; an old English Dramatist, Prior, and Sir Philip Sidney; and the books are "neat as imported." The very perusal of the backs is a "discipline of humanity." There Mr. Southey takes his place again with an old Radical friend: there Jeremy Collier is at peace with Dryden: there the lion, Martin Luther, lies down with the Quaker lamb, Sewell: there Guzman d'Alfarache thinks himself fit company for Sir Charles Grandison, and has his claims admitted. Even the "high fantastical" Duchess of Newcastle, with her laurel on her head, is received with grave honours, and not the less for declining to trouble herself with the constitutions of her maids. There is an approach to this in the library of W. C., who also includes Italian among his humanities. W[illiam] H[azlitt], I believe, has no books, except mine; but he has Shakespeare and Rousseau by heart. [Vincent] N[ovello], who though not a bookman by profession, is fond of those who are, and who loves his volume enough to read it across the fields, has his library in the common sitting-room, which is hospitable. H. R.'s books are all too modern and finely bound, which however is not his fault, for they were left him by will,—not the most kindly act of the testator. Suppose a man were to bequeath us a great japan chest three feet by four, with an injunction that it was always to stand on the tea-table. I remember borrowing a book of H. R. which, having lost, I replaced with a copy equally well bound. I am not sure I should have been in such haste, even to return the book, had it been a common-looking volume; but the splendour of the loss dazzled me into this ostentatious piece of propriety. I set about restoring it as if I had diminished his fortunes, and waived the privilege a friend has to use a man's things as his own. I may venture upon this ultra-liberal theory, not only because candour compels me to say that I hold it to a greater extent, with Montaigne, but because I have been a meek son in the family of book-losers. I may affirm, upon a moderate calculation, that I have lent and lost in my time (and I am eight-and-thirty), half-a-dozen decent-sized libraries,—I mean books

enough to fill so many ordinary bookcases. I have never complained; and self-love, as well as gratitude, makes me love those who do not complain of me.

But, like other patient people, I am inclined to burst out now that I grow less strong,—now that writing puts a hectic to my cheek. Publicity is nothing nowadays "between friends." There is R., not H. R., who in return for breaking my set of English Poets, makes a point of forgetting me, whenever he has poets in his eye; which is carrying his conscience too far. But W[illiam] H[azlitt] treated me worse; for not content with losing other of said English Poets, together with my Philip Sidney (all in one volume) and divers pieces of Bacon, he vows I never lent them to him; which is "the unkindest cut of all." This comes of being magnanimous. It is a poor thing after all to be "pushed from a level consideration" of one's superiority in matters of provocation. But W[illiam] H[azlitt] is not angry on this occasion though he is forgetful; and in spite of his offences against me and mine (not to be done away with by his good word at intervals), I pardon the irritable patriot and metaphysician, who would give his last penny to an acquaintance, and his last pulse to the good of mankind. Why did he fire up at an idle word from one of the few men, who thought as deeply as himself, and who "died daily" in the same awful cause? But I forgive him, because *he* forgave him, and yet I know not if I can do it for that very reason.

> Come, my best friends, my books, and lead me on:
> 'Tis time that I were gone.

I own I borrow books with as much facility as I lend. I cannot see a work that interests me on another person's shelf, without a wish to carry it off: but, I repeat, that I have been much more sinned against than sinning in the article of non-return; and am scrupulous in the article of intention. I never had a felonious intent upon a book but once; and then I shall only say, it was under circumstances so peculiar, that I cannot but look upon the conscience that induced me to restore it, as having sacrificed the spirit of its very self to the letter; and I have a grudge against it accordingly. Some people are unwilling to lend their books. I have a special grudge against them, particularly those who accompany their unwillingness with uneasy professions to the contrary, and smiles like Sir Fretful Plagiary. The friend who helped to spoil my notions of property, or rather to make them too good for the world

"as it goes," taught me also to undervalue my squeamishness in refusing to avail myself of the books of these gentlemen. He showed me how it was doing good to all parties to put an ordinary face on the matter; though I know his own blushed not a little sometimes in doing it, even when the good to be done was for another. (Dear S[helley], in all thy actions, small as well as great, how sure was the beauty of thy spirit to break forth!) I feel, in truth, that even when anger inclines me to exercise this privilege of philosophy, it is more out of revenge than contempt. I fear that in allowing myself to borrow books, I sometimes make extremes meet in a very sinful manner, and do it out of a refined revenge. It is like eating a miser's beef at him.

I yield to none in my love of bookstall urbanity. I have spent as happy moments over the stalls (until the woman looked out), as any literary apprentice boy who ought to be moving onwards. But I confess my weakness in liking to see some of my favourite purchases neatly bound. The books I like to have about me most are, Spenser, Chaucer, the minor poems of Milton, the *Arabian Nights*, Theocritus, Ariosto, and such old good-natured speculations as Plutarch's *Morals*. For most of these I like a plain good old binding, never mind how old, provided it wears well; but my *Arabian Nights* may be bound in as fine and flowery a style as possible, and I should love an engraving to every dozen pages. Book-prints of all sorts, bad and good, take with me as much as when I was a child: and I think some books, such as Prior's *Poems*, ought always to have portraits of the authors. Prior's airy face with his cap on, is like having his company. From early association, no edition of Milton pleases me so much, as that in which there are pictures of the Devil with brute ears, dressed like a Roman General: nor of Bunyan, as the one containing the print of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, with the Devil whispering in Christian's ear, or old Pope by the wayside, and

> Vanity Fair,
> With the Pilgrims suffering there.

I delight in the recollection of the puzzle I used to have with the frontispiece of the *Tale of a Tub*, of my real horror at the sight of that crawling old man representing Avarice, at the beginning of *Enfield's Speaker*, the *Looking Glass*, or some such book; and even of the careless schoolboy hats, and the prim stomachers and cottage bonnets, of such golden-age antiquities

as the *Village School*. The oldest and most worn-out woodcut, representing King Pippin, Goody Two Shoes, or the grim Soldan, sitting with three staring blots for his eyes and mouth, his sceptre in one hand, and his other five fingers raised and spread in admiration at the feats of the Gallant London Prentice, cannot excite in me a feeling of ingratitude. Cooke's edition of the *British Poets and Novelists* came out when I was at school: for which reason I never could put up with Suttaby's or Walker's publications, except in the case of such works as the *Fairy Tales*, which Mr. Cooke did not publish. Besides, they are too cramped, thick, and mercenary; and the pictures are all frontispieces. They do not come in at the proper places. Cooke realised the old woman's *beau idéal* of a prayer-book,—"A little book, with a great deal of matter, and a large type": for the type was really large for so small a volume. Shall I ever forget his Collins and his Gray, books at once so "superbly ornamented" and so inconceivably cheap? Sixpence could procure much before; but never could it procure so much as then, or was at once so much respected, and so little cared for. His artist Kirk was the best artist, except Stothard, that ever designed for periodical works; and I will venture to add (if his name rightly announces his country) the best artist Scotland ever produced, except Wilkie, but he unfortunately had not enough of his country in him to keep him from dying young. His designs for Milton and the *Arabian Nights*, his female extricated from the water in the *Tales of the Genii*, and his old hag issuing out of the chest of the Merchant Abudah in the same book, are before me now, as vividly as they were then. He possessed elegance and the sense of beauty in no ordinary degree; though they sometimes played a trick or so of foppery. I shall never forget the gratitude with which I received an odd number of Akenside, value sixpence, one of the set of that poet, which a boarder distributed among three or four of us, "with his mother's compliments." The present might have been more lavish, but I hardly thought of that. I remember my number. It was the one in which there is a picture of the poet on a sofa, with Cupid coming to him, and the words underneath, "Tempt me no more, insidious Love!" The picture and the number appeared to me equally divine. I cannot help thinking to this day, that it is right and natural in a gentleman to sit in a stage dress, on that particular kind of sofa, though on no other, with that exclusive hat and feathers on his head, telling Cupid to begone with a tragedy air. Cowley

says that even when he was "a very young boy at school, instead of his running about on holidays, and playing with his fellows, he was wont to steal from them and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if he could find one of the same temper." When I was at school, I had no fields to run into, or I should certainly have gone there; and I must own to having played a great deal; but then I drew my sports as much as possible out of books, playing at Trojan wars, chivalrous encounters with coal-staves, and even at religious mysteries. When I was not at these games, I was either reading in a corner, or walking round the cloisters with a book under one arm and my friend linked with the other, or with my thoughts. It has since been my fate to realise all the romantic notions I had of a friend at that time, and just as I had embraced him in a distant country, to have him torn from me. This it is that sprinkles the most cheerful of my speculations now with tears, and that must obtain me the reader's pardon for a style unusually chequered and egoistical. No man was a greater lover of books than he. He was rarely to be seen, unless attending to other people's affairs, without a volume of some sort, generally of Plato or one of the Greek tragedians. Nor will those who understand the real spirit of his scepticism, be surprised to hear that one of his companions was the Bible. He valued it for the beauty of some of its contents, for the dignity of others, and the curiosity of all; though the philosophy of Solomon he thought too *Epicurean*, and the inconsistencies of other parts afflicted him. His favourite part was the book of Job, which he thought the grandest of tragedies. He projected founding one of his own upon it; and I will undertake to say, that Job would have sat in that tragedy with a patience and profundity of thought worthy of the original. Being asked on one occasion, what book he would save for himself if he could save no other? he answered, "The oldest book, the Bible." It was a monument to him of the earliest, most lasting, and most awful aspirations of humanity. But more of this on a fitter occasion.

I love an author the more for having been himself a lover of books. The idea of an ancient library perplexes our sympathy by its map-like volumes, rolled upon cylinders. Our imagination cannot take kindly to a yard of wit, or to thirty inches of moral observation, rolled out like linen in a draper's shop. But we conceive of Plato as of a lover of books; of Aristotle certainly; of Plutarch, Pliny, Horace, Julian, and Marcus Aurelius. Virgil,

too, must have been one; and, after a fashion, Martial. May I confess, that the passage which I recollect with the greatest pleasure in Cicero, is where he says that books delight us at home, *and are no impediment abroad*; travel with us, ruralise with us. His period is rounded off to some purpose: "*Delectant domi, non impediunt foris ; peregrinantur, rusticantur.*" I am so much of this opinion, that I do not care to be anywhere without having a book or books at hand, and like Dr. Orkborne, in the novel of *Camilla*, stuff the coach or post-chaise with them whenever I travel. As books, however, become ancient, the love of them becomes more unequivocal and conspicuous. The ancients had little of what we call learning. They made it. They were also no very eminent buyers of books—they made books for posterity. It is true, that it is not at all necessary to love many books, in order to love them much. The scholar, in Chaucer, who would rather have

> At his beddes head
> A twenty bokes, clothed, in black and red,
> Of Aristotle and his philosophy,
> Than robès rich, or fiddle, or psaltry—

doubtless beat all our modern collectors in his passion for reading; but books must at least exist, and have acquired an eminence, before their lovers can make themselves known. There must be a possession, also, to perfect the communion; and the mere contact is much, even when our mistress speaks an unknown language. Dante puts Homer, the great ancient, in his Elysium, upon trust; but a few years afterwards, *Homer*, the book, made its appearance in Italy, and Petrarch, in a transport, put it upon his book-shelves, where he adored it, like "the unknown God." Petrarch ought to be the god of the bibliomaniacs, for he was a collector and a man of genius, which is an union that does not often happen. He copied out, with his own precious hand, the manuscripts he rescued from time, and then produced others for time to reverence. With his head upon a book he died. Boccaccio, his friend, was another; nor can one look upon the longest and most tiresome works he wrote (for he did write some tiresome ones, in spite of the gaiety of his *Decameron*), without thinking, that in that resuscitation of the world of letters, it must have been natural to a man of genius to add to the existing stock of volumes, at whatsoever price. I always pitch my completest idea of a lover of books, either in these dark ages, as they are called,

> (Cui cieco a torto il cieco volgo appella)—

or in the gay town days of Charles II, or a little afterwards. In both times the portrait comes out by the force of contrast. In the first, I imagine an age of iron warfare and energy, with solitary retreats, in which the monk or the hooded scholar walks forth to meditate, his precious volume under his arm. In the other, I have a triumphant example of the power of books and wit to contest the victory with sensual pleasure:—Rochester, staggering home to pen a satire in the style of Monsieur Boileau; Butler, cramming his jolly duodecimo with all the learning that he laughed at; and a new race of book poets come up, who, in spite of their periwigs and petit-maîtres, talk as romantically of "the bays," as if they were priests of Delphos. It was a victorious thing in books to beguile even the old French of their egotism, or at least to share it with them. Nature never pretended to do as much. And here is the difference between the two ages, or between any two ages in which genius and art predominate. In the one, books are loved because they are the records of Nature and her energies; in the other, because they are the records of those records, or evidences of the importance of the individuals, and proofs of our descent in the new and imperishable aristocracy. This is the reason why rank (with few exceptions) is so jealous of literature, and loves to appropriate or withhold the honours of it, as if they were so many toys and ribbons, like its own. It has an instinct that the two pretensions are incompatible. When Montaigne (a real lover of books) affected the order of St. Michael, and pleased himself with possessing that fugitive little piece of importance, he did it because he would pretend to be above nothing that he really felt, or that was felt by men in general; but at the same time he vindicated his natural superiority over this weakness by praising and loving all higher and lasting things, and by placing his best glory in doing homage to the geniuses that had gone before him. He did not endeavour to think that an immortal renown was a fashion, like that of the cut of his scarf; or that by undervaluing the one, he should go shining down to posterity in the other, perpetual lord of Montaigne and of the ascendant.

There is a period of modern times, at which the love of books appears to have been of a more decided nature than at either of these—I mean the age just before and after the Reformation, or rather all that period when book-writing was confined to the learned languages. Erasmus is the god of it. Bacon, a mighty bookman, saw, among his other sights, the great advantage

of loosening the vernacular tongue, and wrote both Latin and English. I allow this is the greatest closeted age of books; of old scholars sitting in dusty studies; of heaps of "illustrious obscure," rendering themselves more illustrious and more obscure by retreating from the "thorny queaches" of Dutch and German names into the "vacant interlunar caves" of appellations latinised or translated. I think I see all their volumes now, filling the shelves of a dozen German convents. The authors are bearded men, sitting in old woodcuts, in caps and gowns, and their books are dedicated to princes and statesmen, as illustrious as themselves. My old friend Wierus, who wrote a thick book, *De Præstigiis Dæmonum*, was one of them, and had a fancy worthy of his sedentary stomach. I will confess, once for all, that I have a liking for them all. It is my link with the bibliomaniacs, whom I admit into our relationship, because my love is large, and my family pride nothing. But still I take my idea of books read with a gusto, of companions for bed and board, from the two ages before-mentioned. The other is of too bookworm a description. There must be both a judgment and a fervour; a discrimination and a boyish eagerness; and (with all due humility) something of a point of contact between authors worth reading and the reader. How can I take Juvenal into the fields, or Valcarenghius *De Aortæ Aneurismate* to bed with me? How could I expect to walk before the face of nature with the one; to tire my elbow properly with the other, before I put out my candle, and turn round deliciously on the right side? Or how could I stick up *Coke upon Littleton* against something on the dinner-table, and be divided between a fresh paragraph and a mouthful of salad?

I take our four great English poets to have all been fond of reading. Milton and Chaucer proclaim themselves for hard sitters at books. Spenser's reading is evident by his learning; and if there were nothing else to show for it in Shakespeare, his retiring to his native town, long before old age, would be a proof of it. It is impossible for a man to live in solitude without such assistance, unless he is a metaphysician or mathematician, or the dullest of mankind; and any country town would be solitude to Shakespeare, after the bustle of a metropolis and a theatre. Doubtless he divided his time between his books, and his bowling-green, and his daughter Susanna. It is pretty certain, also, that he planted, and rode on horseback; and there is evidence of all sorts to make it clear, that he must have occasionally joked with the blacksmith, and stood godfather for his

neighbours' children. Chaucer's account of himself must be quoted, for the delight and sympathy of all true readers:

> And as for me, though that I can but lite,
> On bookès for to rede I me delite,
> And to hem yeve I faith and full credence,
> And in mine herte have hem in reverence
> So hertèly, that there is gamè none,
> That fro my bookès maketh me to gone,
> But it is seldome on the holy daie;
> Save certainly whan that the month of May
> Is comen, and that I hear the foulès sing,
> And that the flourès ginnen for to spring,
> Farewell my booke and my devotion.
>
> *The Legend of Good Women.*

And again, in the second book of his *House of Fame*, where *the eagle* addresses him:

> ———Thou wilt make
> At night full oft thine head to ake,
> And in thy study as thou writest,
> And evermore of Love enditest,
> In honour of him and his praisings,
> And in his folkès furtherings,
> And in his matter all devisest,
> And not him ne his folke despisest,
> Although thou mayst go in the daunse
> Of hem, that him list not advance;
> Therefore as I said, ywis,
> Jupiter considreth well this.
> And also, beausire, of other things;
> That is, thou hast no tidings
> Of Lovès folke, if they be glade,
> Ne of nothing else that God made,
> And not only fro ferre countree,
> But no tidings commen to thee,
> Not of thy very neighbouris,
> That dwellen almost at thy dores;
> Thou hearest neither that ne this,
> For whan thy labour all done is,
> And hast made all thy rekenings,
> Instead of rest and of new things,
> Thou goest home to thine house anone,
> And all so dombe as anie stone,
> Thou sittest at another booke,
> Till fully dazed is thy looke.

After I think of the bookishness of Chaucer and Milton, I always make a great leap to Prior and Fenton. Prior was first noticed, when a boy, by Lord Dorset, sitting in his uncle's tavern, and reading Horace. He describes himself, years after, when Secretary of Embassy at The Hague, as taking the same author with him in the Saturday's chaise, in which he and his mistress used to escape from town cares into the country, to the admiration of Dutch beholders. Fenton was a martyr to contented

scholarship (including a sirloin and a bottle of wine), and died among his books, of inactivity. "He rose late," says Johnson, "and when he had risen, sat down to his books and papers." A woman that once waited on him in a lodging, told him, as she said, that he would "lie a-bed and be fed with a spoon." He must have had an enviable liver, if he was happy. I must own (if my conscience would let me), that I should like to lead, half the year, just such a life (woman included, though not that woman), the other half being passed in the fields and woods, with a cottage just big enough to hold us. Dacier and his wife had a pleasant time of it; both fond of books, both scholars, both amiable, both wrapt up in the ancient world, and helping one another at their tasks. If they were not happy, matrimony would be a rule even without an exception. Pope does not strike me as being a bookman; he was curious rather than enthusiastic; more nice than wise; he dabbled in modern Latin poetry, which is a bad symptom. Swift was decidedly a reader; the *Tale of a Tub*, in its fashion as well as substance, is the work of a scholarly wit; the *Battle of the Books* is the fancy of a lover of libraries. Addison and Steele were too much given up to Button's and the town. Periodical writing, though its demands seem otherwise, is not favourable to reading; it becomes too much a matter of business, and will either be attended to at the expense of the writer's books, or books, the very admonishers of his industry, will make him idle. Besides, a periodical work, to be suitable to its character, and warrant its regular recurrence, must involve something of a gossiping nature, and proceed upon experiences familiar to the existing community, or at least likely to be received by them in consequence of some previous tinge of inclination. You do not pay weekly visits to your friends to lecture them, whatever good you may do their minds. There will be something compulsory in reading the *Ramblers*, as there is in going to church. Addison and Steele undertook to regulate the minor morals of society, and effected a world of good, with which scholarship had little to do. Gray was a bookman; he wished to be always lying on sofas, reading "eternal new novels of Crébillon and Marivaux." This is a true hand. The elaborate and scientific look of the rest of his reading was owing to the necessity of employing himself: he had not health and spirits for the literary voluptuousness he desired. Collins, for the same reason, could not employ himself; he was obliged to dream over Arabian tales, to let the light of the supernatural world half in upon his eyes. "He loved," as

Johnson says (in that strain of music, inspired by tenderness), "fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the waterfalls of Elysian gardens." If Collins had had a better constitution, I do not believe that he would have written his projected work upon the "Restoration of Literature," fit as he was by scholarship for the task, but he would have been the greatest poet since the days of Milton. If his friend Thomas Warton had had a little more of his delicacy of organisation, the love of books would almost have made him a poet. His edition of the minor poems of Milton is a wilderness of sweets. It is the only one in which a true lover of the original can pardon an exuberance of annotation; though I confess I am inclined enough to pardon any notes that resemble it, however numerous. The "builded rhyme" stands at the top of the page, like a fair edifice with all sorts of flowers and fresh waters at its foot. The young poet lives there, served by the nymphs and fauns.

> Hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades.
>
> Huc ades, o formose puer: tibi lilia plenis
> Ecce ferunt nymphæ calathis: tibi candida Nais
> Pallentes violas et summa papavera carpens,
> Narcissum et florem jungit bene olentis anethi.

Among the old writers I must not forget Ben Jonson and Donne. Cowley has been already mentioned. His boyish love of books, like all the other inclinations of his early life, stuck to him to the last; which is the greatest reward of virtue. I would mention Izaak Walton, if I had not a grudge against him. His brother fishermen, the divines, were also great fishers of books. I have a grudge against them and their divinity. They talked much of the devil and divine right, and yet forgot what Shakespeare says of the devil's friend Nero, that he is "an angler in the lake of darkness." Selden was called "the walking library of our nation." It is not the pleasantest idea of him; but the library included poetry, and wit, as well as heraldry and the Jewish doctors. His *Table Talk* is equally pithy and pleasant, and truly worthy of the name, for it implies other speakers. Indeed it was actually what it is called, and treasured up by his friends. Selden wrote complimentary verses to his friends the poets, and a commentary on Drayton's *Polyolbion*. Drayton was himself a reader, addicted to all the luxuries of scholarship. Chapman sat among his books, like an astrologer among his spheres and altitudes.

How pleasant it is to reflect, that all these lovers of books have themselves become books! What better metamorphosis could Pythagoras have desired! How Ovid and Horace exulted in anticipating theirs! And how the world have justified their exultation! They had a right to triumph over brass and marble. It is the only visible change which changes no farther; which generates and yet is not destroyed. Consider: mines themselves are exhausted; cities perish; kingdoms are swept away, and man weeps with indignation to think that his own body is not immortal.

> Muoiono le città, muoiono i regni,
> E l' uom d' esser mortal par che si sdegni.

Yet this little body of thought, that lies before me in the shape of a book, has existed thousands of years, nor since the invention of the press can anything short of an universal convulsion of nature abolish it. To a shape like this, so small yet so comprehensive, so slight yet so lasting, so insignificant yet so venerable, turns the mighty activity of Homer, and so turning, is enabled to live and warm us for ever. To a shape like this turns the placid sage of Academus: to a shape like this the grandeur of Milton, the exuberance of Spenser, the pungent elegance of Pope, and the volatility of Prior. In one small room, like the compressed spirits of Milton, can be gathered together

> The assembled souls of all that men held wise.

May I hope to become the meanest of these existences? This is a question which every author who is a lover of books, asks himself some time in his life; and which must be pardoned, because it cannot be helped. I know not. I cannot exclaim with the poet,

> Oh that my name were number'd among theirs,
> Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

For my mortal days, few and feeble as the rest of them may be, are of consequence to others. But I should like to remain visible in this shape. The little of myself that pleases myself, I could wish to be accounted worth pleasing others. I should like to survive so, were it only for the sake of those who love me in private, knowing as I do what a treasure is the possession of a friend's mind, when he is no more. At all events, nothing while I live and think, can deprive me of my value for such treasures. I can help the appreciation of them while I last, and love them till I die; and perhaps, if fortune turns her face

once more in kindness upon me before I go, I may chance, some quiet day, to lay my overbeating temples on a book, and so have the death I most envy.

MY JAILERS

My jailer's name was Ives. I was told he was a very self-willed person, not the more accommodating for being in a bad state of health; and that he called everybody *Mister*. "In short," said one of the tipstaves, "he is one as may be led, but he'll never be *druv*."

The sight of the prison-gate and the high wall was a dreary business. I thought of my horseback and the downs of Brighton; but congratulated myself, at all events, that I had come thither with a good conscience. After waiting in the prison-yard as long as if it had been the ante-room of a minister, I was at length ushered into the presence of the great man. He was in his parlour, which was decently furnished, and had a basin of broth before him, which he quitted on my appearance, and rose with much solemnity to meet me. He seemed about fifty years of age; had a white night-cap on, as if he was going to be hung, and a great red face, which looked ready to burst with blood. Indeed, he was not allowed by his physician to speak in a tone above a whisper. The first thing he said was, "Mister, I'd ha' given a matter of a hundred pounds, that you had not come to this place—a hundred pounds!" The emphasis which he had laid on the word "hundred" was enormous.

I forget what I said. I endeavoured, as usual, to make the best of things; but he recurred over and over again to the hundred pounds; and said he wondered, for his part, what the Government meant by sending me there, for the prison was no a prison fit for a gentleman. He often repeated this opinion afterwards, adding, with a peculiar nod of his head, "And Mister, they knows it."

I said, that if a gentleman deserved to be sent to prison, he ought not to be treated with a greater nicety than anyone else upon which he corrected me, observing very properly (though as the phrase is, it was one word for the gentleman and two fo his own apartments), that a person who had been used to

better mode of living than "low people" was not treated with the same justice, if forced to lodge exactly as they did. I told him his observation was very true; which gave him a favourable opinion of my understanding; for I had many occasions of remarking, that abstractedly considered he looked upon nobody whomsoever as his superior, speaking even of members of the royal family as persons whom he knew very well, and whom he estimated at no higher rate than became him. One Royal Duke had lunched in his parlour, and another he had laid under some polite obligation. "They knows me," said he, "very well, Mister; and, Mister, I knows them." This concluding sentence he uttered with great particularity and precision.

He was not proof, however, against a Greek Pindar, which he happened to light upon one day among my books. Its unintelligible character gave him a notion that he had got somebody to deal with, who might really know something which he did not. Perhaps the gilt leaves and red morocco binding had their share in the magic. The upshot was, that he always showed himself anxious to appear well with me, as a clever fellow, treating me with great civility on all occasions but one, when I made him very angry by disappointing him in a money amount. The Pindar was a mystery that staggered him. I remember very well, that giving me a long account one day of something connected with his business, he happened to catch with his eye the shelf that contained it, and, whether he saw it or not, abruptly finished by observing, "But, Mister, you knows all these things as well as I do."

Upon the whole, my new acquaintance was as strange a person as I ever met with. A total want of education, together with a certain vulgar acuteness, conspired to render him insolent and pedantic. Disease sharpened his tendency to violent fits of passion, which threatened to suffocate him; and then in his intervals of better health he would issue forth, with his cock-up-nose and his hat on one side, as great a fop as a jockey. I remember his coming to my rooms, about the middle of my imprisonment, as if on purpose to insult over my ill health with the contrast of his own convalescence, putting his arms in a gay manner a-kimbo, and telling me I should never live to go out, whereas he was riding about as stout as ever, and had just been in the country. He died before I left prison.

The word *jail*, in deference to the way in which it is sometimes spelt, he pronounced *gole*; and Mr. Brougham he always spoke of as Mr. *Bruffam*. He one day apologised for this mode of

pronunciation, or rather gave a specimen of vanity and self-will, which will show the reader the high notions a jailer may entertain of himself. "I find," said he, "that they calls him *Broom*; but, Mister" (assuming a look from which there was to be no appeal), "*I* calls him *Bruffam*!" . . .

On taking possession of my garret, I was treated with a piece of delicacy, which I never should have thought of finding in a prison. When I first entered its walls, I had been received by the under-jailer, a man who seemed an epitome of all that was forbidding in his office. He was short and very thick, had a hook-nose, a great severe countenance, and a bunch of keys hanging on his arm. A friend stopped short at sight of him, and said, in a melancholy tone, "And this is the jailer!"

Honest old *Cave*! thine outside would have been unworthy of thee, if upon farther acquaintance I had not found it a very hearty outside—ay, and in my eyes, a very good-looking one, and as fit to contain the milk of human kindness that was in thee, as the husk of a cocoa. Was, did I say? I hope it is in thee still; I hope thou art alive to read this paper, and to perform, as usual, a hundred kind offices, as exquisite in their way as they are desirable and unlooked for. To finish at once the character of this man,—I could never prevail on him to accept any acknowledgment of his kindness, greater than a set of tea-things, and a piece or two of old furniture, which I could not well carry away. I had, indeed, the pleasure of leaving him in possession of a room I had papered; but this was a thing unexpected, and which neither of us had supposed could be done. Had I been a prince, I would have forced on him a pension; being a journalist, I made him accept an *Examiner* weekly, which he lived for some years to relish his Sunday pipe with.

This man, in the interval between my arrival and my introduction to the head-jailer, had found means to give me farther information respecting my condition, and to express the interest he took in it. I thought little of his offers at the time. He behaved with the greatest air of deference to his principal; moving as fast as his body would allow him, to execute his least intimation; and holding the candle to him while he read, with an obsequious zeal. But he had spoken to his wife about me, and his wife I found to be as great a curiosity as himself. Both were more like the romantic jailers drawn in some of our modern plays, than real Horsemonger-Lane palpabilities. The wife, in her person, was as light and fragile as the husband was

sturdy. She had the nerves of a fine lady, and yet went through the most unpleasant duties with the patience of a martyr. Her voice and look seemed to plead for a softness like their own, as if a loud reply would have shattered her. Ill health had made her a Methodist, but this did not hinder her sympathy with an invalid who was none, or her love for her husband who was as little of a saint as need be. Upon the whole, such an extraordinary couple, so apparently unsuitable, and yet so fitted for one another; so apparently vulgar on one side, and yet so naturally delicate on both; so misplaced in their situation, and yet for the good of others so admirably put there, I have never met with before or since.

It was the business of this woman to lock me up in my garret; but she did it so softly the first night, that I knew nothing of the matter. The night following, I thought I heard a gentle tampering with the lock. I tried it, and found it fastened. She heard me as she was going down stairs, and said the next day, "Ah, sir, I thought I should have turned the key so as for you not to hear it; but I found you did." The whole conduct of this couple towards us, from first to last, was of a piece with this singular delicacy.

THE WAITER

Going into the City the other day upon business, we took a chop at a tavern, and renewed our acquaintance, after years of interruption, with that swift and untiring personage, yclept a waiter. We mention this long interval of acquaintance, in order to account for any deficiencies that may be found in our description of him. Our readers perhaps will favour us with a better. He is a character before the public: thousands are acquainted with him, and can fill up the outline. But we felt irresistibly impelled to sketch him; like a portrait-painter who comes suddenly upon an old friend, or upon an old servant of the family.

We speak of the waiter properly and generally so called,—the representative of the whole, real, official race,—and not of the humorist or other eccentric genius occasionally to be found in it,—moving out of the orbit of tranquil but fiery waiting,

—not absorbed,—not devout towards us,—not silent or monosyllabical;—fellows that affect a character beyond that of waiter, and get spoiled in club-rooms, and places of theatrical resort.

Your thorough waiter has no ideas out of the sphere of his duty and the business; and yet he is not narrow-minded either. He sees too much variety of character for that, and has to exercise too much consideration for the "drunken gentleman." But his world is the tavern, and all mankind but its visitors. His female sex are the maid-servants and his young mistress, or the widow. If he is ambitious, he aspires to marry one of the latter: if otherwise, and Molly is prudent, he does not know but he may carry her off some day to be mistress of the "Golden Lion" at Chinksford, where he will "show off" in the eyes of Betty Laxon who refused him. He has no feeling of noise itself but as the sound of dining, or of silence but as a thing before dinner. Even a loaf with him is hardly a loaf; it is so many "breads." His longest speech is the making out of a bill viva voce—"Two beefs—one potatoes—three ales—two wines —six and twopence"—which he does with an indifferent celerity, amusing to new-comers who have been relishing their fare, and not considering it as a mere set of items. He attributes all virtues to everybody, provided they are civil and liberal; and of the existence of some vices he has no notion. Gluttony, for instance, with him, is not only inconceivable, but looks very like a virtue. He sees in it only so many more "beefs," and a generous scorn of the bill. As to wine, or almost any other liquor, it is out of your power to astonish him with the quantity you call for. His "Yes, Sir" is as swift, indifferent, and official, at the fifth bottle as at the first. Reform and other public events he looks upon purely as things in the newspaper, and the newspaper as a thing taken in at taverns, for gentlemen to read. His own reading is confined to "Accidents" and "Offences," and the advertisements for Butlers, which latter he peruses with an admiring fear, not choosing to give up "a certainty." When young, he was always in a hurry, and exasperated his mistress by running against the other waiters, and breaking the "neguses." As he gets older, he learns to unite swiftness with caution; declines wasting his breath in immediate answers to calls; and knows, with a slight turn of his face, and elevation of his voice, into what precise corner of the room to pitch his "Coming, Sir." If you told him that, in Shakespeare's time, waiters said "Anon, anon, Sir," he would be astonished at the repetition of the same word in one answer, and at the use of

three words instead of two; and he would justly infer, that London could not have been so large, nor the chop-houses so busy, in those days. He would drop one of the two syllables of his "Yes, Sir," if he could; but business and civility will not allow it; and therefore he does what he can by running them together in the swift sufficiency of his "Yezzir."

"Thomas!"

"Yezzir."

"Is my steak coming?"

"Yezzir."

"And the pint of port?"

"Yezzir."

"You'll not forget the postman?"

"Yezzir."

For in the habit of his acquiescence Thomas not seldom says "Yes, Sir," for "No, Sir," the habit itself rendering him intelligible.

His morning dress is a waistcoat or jacket; his coat is for afternoons. If the establishment is flourishing, he likes to get into black as he grows elderly; by which time also he is generally a little corpulent, and wears hair-powder, dressing somewhat laxly about the waist, for convenience of movement. Not however that he draws much upon that part of his body, except as a poise to what he carries; for you may observe that a waiter, in walking, uses only his lowest limbs, from his knees downwards. The movement of all the rest of him is negative, and modified solely by what he bears in his hands. At this period he has a little money in the funds, and his nieces look up to him. He still carries however a napkin under his arm, as well as a corkscrew in his pocket; nor, for all his long habit, can he help feeling a satisfaction at the noise he makes in drawing a cork. He thinks that no man can do it better; and that Mr. Smith, who understands wine, is thinking so too, though he does not take his eyes off the plate. In his right waistcoat pocket is a snuff-box, with which he supplies gentlemen late at night, after the shops are shut up, and when they are in desperate want of another fillip to their sensations, after the devil and toasted cheese. If particularly required, he will laugh at a joke, especially at that time of night, justly thinking that gentlemen towards one in the morning "*will* be facetious." He is of opinion it is in "human nature" to be a little fresh at that period, and to want to be put into a coach.

He announces his acquisition of property by a bunch of seals

to his watch, and perhaps rings on his fingers; one of them a mourning ring left him by his late master, the other a present, either from his nieces' father, or from some ultra-goodnatured old gentleman whom he helped into a coach one night, and who had no silver about him.

To see him dine, somehow, hardly seems natural. And he appears to do it as if he had no right. You catch him at his dinner in a corner,—huddled apart,—"Thomas dining!" instead of helping dinner. One fancies that the stewed and hot meats and the constant smoke ought to be too much for him, and that he should have neither appetite nor time for such a meal.

Once a year (for he has few holidays) a couple of pedestrians meet him on a Sunday in the fields, and cannot conceive for the life of them who it is, till the startling recollection occurs—"Good God! It's the waiter at the Grogram!"

THE END

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How pleasant it is to reflect, that all these lovers of books have themselves become books! What better metamorphosis could Pythagoras have desired! How Ovid and Horace exulted in anticipating theirs! And how the world have justified their exultation! They had a right to triumph over brass and marble. It is the only visible change which changes no farther; which generates and yet is not destroyed. Consider: mines themselves are exhausted; cities perish; kingdoms are swept away, and man weeps with indignation to think that his own body is not immortal.

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> Oh that my name were number'd among theirs,
> Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

For my mortal days, few and feeble as the rest of them may be, are of consequence to others. But I should like to remain visible in this shape. The little of myself that pleases myself, I could wish to be accounted worth pleasing others. I should like to survive so, were it only for the sake of those who love me in private, knowing as I do what a treasure is the possession of a friend's mind, when he is no more. At all events, nothing while I live and think, can deprive me of my value for such treasures. I can help the appreciation of them while I last, and love them till I die; and perhaps, if fortune turns her face

once more in kindness upon me before I go, I may chance, some quiet day, to lay my overbeating temples on a book, and so have the death I most envy.

MY JAILERS

My jailer's name was Ives. I was told he was a very self-willed person, not the more accommodating for being in a bad state of health; and that he called everybody *Mister*. "In short," said one of the tipstaves, "he is one as may be led, but he'll never be *druv*."

The sight of the prison-gate and the high wall was a dreary business. I thought of my horseback and the downs of Brighton; but congratulated myself, at all events, that I had come thither with a good conscience. After waiting in the prison-yard as long as if it had been the ante-room of a minister, I was at length ushered into the presence of the great man. He was in his parlour, which was decently furnished, and had a basin of broth before him, which he quitted on my appearance, and rose with much solemnity to meet me. He seemed about fifty years of age; had a white night-cap on, as if he was going to be hung, and a great red face, which looked ready to burst with blood. Indeed, he was not allowed by his physician to speak in a tone above a whisper. The first thing he said was, "Mister, I'd ha' given a matter of a hundred pounds, that you had not come to this place—a hundred pounds!" The emphasis which he had laid on the word "hundred" was enormous.

I forget what I said. I endeavoured, as usual, to make the best of things; but he recurred over and over again to the hundred pounds; and said he wondered, for his part, what the Government meant by sending me there, for the prison was not a prison fit for a gentleman. He often repeated this opinion afterwards, adding, with a peculiar nod of his head, "And, Mister, they knows it."

I said, that if a gentleman deserved to be sent to prison, he ought not to be treated with a greater nicety than anyone else: upon which he corrected me, observing very properly (though, as the phrase is, it was one word for the gentleman and two for his own apartments), that a person who had been used to a

better mode of living than "low people" was not treated with the same justice, if forced to lodge exactly as they did. I told him his observation was very true; which gave him a favourable opinion of my understanding; for I had many occasions of remarking, that abstractedly considered he looked upon nobody whomsoever as his superior, speaking even of members of the royal family as persons whom he knew very well, and whom he estimated at no higher rate than became him. One Royal Duke had lunched in his parlour, and another he had laid under some polite obligation. "They knows me," said he, "very well, Mister; and, Mister, I knows them." This concluding sentence he uttered with great particularity and precision.

He was not proof, however, against a Greek Pindar, which he happened to light upon one day among my books. Its unintelligible character gave him a notion that he had got somebody to deal with, who might really know something which he did not. Perhaps the gilt leaves and red morocco binding had their share in the magic. The upshot was, that he always showed himself anxious to appear well with me, as a clever fellow, treating me with great civility on all occasions but one, when I made him very angry by disappointing him in a money amount. The Pindar was a mystery that staggered him. I remember very well, that giving me a long account one day of something connected with his business, he happened to catch with his eye the shelf that contained it, and, whether he saw it or not, abruptly finished by observing, "But, Mister, you knows all these things as well as I do."

Upon the whole, my new acquaintance was as strange a person as I ever met with. A total want of education, together with a certain vulgar acuteness, conspired to render him insolent and pedantic. Disease sharpened his tendency to violent fits of passion, which threatened to suffocate him; and then in his intervals of better health he would issue forth, with his cock-up-nose and his hat on one side, as great a fop as a jockey. I remember his coming to my rooms, about the middle of my imprisonment, as if on purpose to insult over my ill health with the contrast of his own convalescence, putting his arms in a gay manner a-kimbo, and telling me I should never live to go out, whereas he was riding about as stout as ever, and had just been in the country. He died before I left prison.

The word *jail*, in deference to the way in which it is sometimes spelt, he pronounced *gole*; and Mr. Brougham he always spoke of as Mr. *Bruffam*. He one day apologised for this mode of

pronunciation, or rather gave a specimen of vanity and self-will, which will show the reader the high notions a jailer may entertain of himself. "I find," said he, "that they calls him *Broom*; but, Mister" (assuming a look from which there was to be no appeal), "*I* calls him *Bruffam*!" . . .

On taking possession of my garret, I was treated with a piece of delicacy, which I never should have thought of finding in a prison. When I first entered its walls, I had been received by the under-jailer, a man who seemed an epitome of all that was forbidding in his office. He was short and very thick, had a hook-nose, a great severe countenance, and a bunch of keys hanging on his arm. A friend stopped short at sight of him, and said, in a melancholy tone, "And this is the jailer!"

Honest old *Cave*! thine outside would have been unworthy of thee, if upon farther acquaintance I had not found it a very hearty outside—ay, and in my eyes, a very good-looking one, and as fit to contain the milk of human kindness that was in thee, as the husk of a cocoa. Was, did I say? I hope it is in thee still; I hope thou art alive to read this paper, and to perform, as usual, a hundred kind offices, as exquisite in their way as they are desirable and unlooked for. To finish at once the character of this man,—I could never prevail on him to accept any acknowledgment of his kindness, greater than a set of tea-things, and a piece or two of old furniture, which I could not well carry away. I had, indeed, the pleasure of leaving him in possession of a room I had papered; but this was a thing unexpected, and which neither of us had supposed could be done. Had I been a prince, I would have forced on him a pension; being a journalist, I made him accept an *Examiner* weekly, which he lived for some years to relish his Sunday pipe with.

This man, in the interval between my arrival and my introduction to the head-jailer, had found means to give me farther information respecting my condition, and to express the interest he took in it. I thought little of his offers at the time. He behaved with the greatest air of deference to his principal; moving as fast as his body would allow him, to execute his least intimation; and holding the candle to him while he read, with an obsequious zeal. But he had spoken to his wife about me, and his wife I found to be as great a curiosity as himself. Both were more like the romantic jailers drawn in some of our modern plays, than real Horsemonger-Lane palpabilities. The wife, in her person, was as light and fragile as the husband was

sturdy. She had the nerves of a fine lady, and yet went through the most unpleasant duties with the patience of a martyr. Her voice and look seemed to plead for a softness like their own, as if a loud reply would have shattered her. Ill health had made her a Methodist, but this did not hinder her sympathy with an invalid who was none, or her love for her husband who was as little of a saint as need be. Upon the whole, such an extraordinary couple, so apparently unsuitable, and yet so fitted for one another; so apparently vulgar on one side, and yet so naturally delicate on both; so misplaced in their situation, and yet for the good of others so admirably put there, I have never met with before or since.

It was the business of this woman to lock me up in my garret; but she did it so softly the first night, that I knew nothing of the matter. The night following, I thought I heard a gentle tampering with the lock. I tried it, and found it fastened. She heard me as she was going down stairs, and said the next day, "Ah, sir, I thought I should have turned the key so as for you not to hear it; but I found you did." The whole conduct of this couple towards us, from first to last, was of a piece with this singular delicacy.

THE WAITER

Going into the City the other day upon business, we took a chop at a tavern, and renewed our acquaintance, after years of interruption, with that swift and untiring personage, yclept a waiter. We mention this long interval of acquaintance, in order to account for any deficiencies that may be found in our description of him. Our readers perhaps will favour us with a better. He is a character before the public: thousands are acquainted with him, and can fill up the outline. But we felt irresistibly impelled to sketch him; like a portrait-painter who comes suddenly upon an old friend, or upon an old servant of the family.

We speak of the waiter properly and generally so called,—the representative of the whole, real, official race,—and not of the humorist or other eccentric genius occasionally to be found in it,—moving out of the orbit of tranquil but fiery waiting,

—not absorbed,—not devout towards us,—not silent or monosyllabical;—fellows that affect a character beyond that of waiter, and get spoiled in club-rooms, and places of theatrical resort.

Your thorough waiter has no ideas out of the sphere of his duty and the business; and yet he is not narrow-minded either. He sees too much variety of character for that, and has to exercise too much consideration for the "drunken gentleman." But his world is the tavern, and all mankind but its visitors. His female sex are the maid-servants and his young mistress, or the widow. If he is ambitious, he aspires to marry one of the latter: if otherwise, and Molly is prudent, he does not know but he may carry her off some day to be mistress of the "Golden Lion" at Chinksford, where he will "show off" in the eyes of Betty Laxon who refused him. He has no feeling of noise itself but as the sound of dining, or of silence but as a thing before dinner. Even a loaf with him is hardly a loaf; it is so many "breads." His longest speech is the making out of a bill viva voce—"Two beefs—one potatoes—three ales—two wines —six and twopence"—which he does with an indifferent celerity, amusing to new-comers who have been relishing their fare, and not considering it as a mere set of items. He attributes all virtues to everybody, provided they are civil and liberal; and of the existence of some vices he has no notion. Gluttony, for instance, with him, is not only inconceivable, but looks very like a virtue. He sees in it only so many more "beefs," and a generous scorn of the bill. As to wine, or almost any other liquor, it is out of your power to astonish him with the quantity you call for. His "Yes, Sir" is as swift, indifferent, and official, at the fifth bottle as at the first. Reform and other public events he looks upon purely as things in the newspaper, and the newspaper as a thing taken in at taverns, for gentlemen to read. His own reading is confined to "Accidents" and "Offences," and the advertisements for Butlers, which latter he peruses with an admiring fear, not choosing to give up "a certainty." When young, he was always in a hurry, and exasperated his mistress by running against the other waiters, and breaking the "neguses." As he gets older, he learns to unite swiftness with caution; declines wasting his breath in immediate answers to calls; and knows, with a slight turn of his face, and elevation of his voice, into what precise corner of the room to pitch his "Coming, Sir." If you told him that, in Shakespeare's time, waiters said "Anon, anon, Sir," he would be astonished at the repetition of the same word in one answer, and at the use of

three words instead of two; and he would justly infer, that London could not have been so large, nor the chop-houses so busy, in those days. He would drop one of the two syllables of his "Yes, Sir," if he could; but business and civility will not allow it; and therefore he does what he can by running them together in the swift sufficiency of his "Yezzir."

"Thomas!"

"Yezzir."

"Is my steak coming?"

"Yezzir."

"And the pint of port?"

"Yezzir."

"You'll not forget the postman?"

"Yezzir."

For in the habit of his acquiescence Thomas not seldom says "Yes, Sir," for "No, Sir," the habit itself rendering him intelligible.

His morning dress is a waistcoat or jacket; his coat is for afternoons. If the establishment is flourishing, he likes to get into black as he grows elderly; by which time also he is generally a little corpulent, and wears hair-powder, dressing somewhat laxly about the waist, for convenience of movement. Not however that he draws much upon that part of his body, except as a poise to what he carries; for you may observe that a waiter, in walking, uses only his lowest limbs, from his knees downwards. The movement of all the rest of him is negative, and modified solely by what he bears in his hands. At this period he has a little money in the funds, and his nieces look up to him. He still carries however a napkin under his arm, as well as a corkscrew in his pocket; nor, for all his long habit, can he help feeling a satisfaction at the noise he makes in drawing a cork. He thinks that no man can do it better; and that Mr. Smith, who understands wine, is thinking so too, though he does not take his eyes off the plate. In his right waistcoat pocket is a snuff-box, with which he supplies gentlemen late at night, after the shops are shut up, and when they are in desperate want of another fillip to their sensations, after the devil and toasted cheese. If particularly required, he will laugh at a joke, especially at that time of night, justly thinking that gentlemen towards one in the morning "*will* be facetious." He is of opinion it is in "human nature" to be a little fresh at that period, and to want to be put into a coach.

He announces his acquisition of property by a bunch of seals

to his watch, and perhaps rings on his fingers; one of them a mourning ring left him by his late master, the other a present, either from his nieces' father, or from some ultra-goodnatured old gentleman whom he helped into a coach one night, and who had no silver about him.

To see him dine, somehow, hardly seems natural. And he appears to do it as if he had no right. You catch him at his dinner in a corner,—huddled apart,—"Thomas dining!" instead of helping dinner. One fancies that the stewed and hot meats and the constant smoke ought to be too much for him, and that he should have neither appetite nor time for such a meal.

Once a year (for he has few holidays) a couple of pedestrians meet him on a Sunday in the fields, and cannot conceive for the life of them who it is, till the startling recollection occurs—"Good God! It's the waiter at the Grogram!"

THE END

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